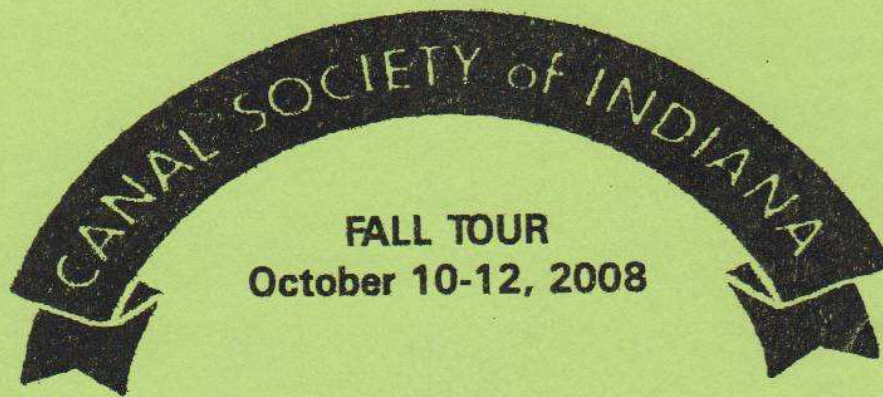


WABASH & ERIE CANAL CROSS-CUT

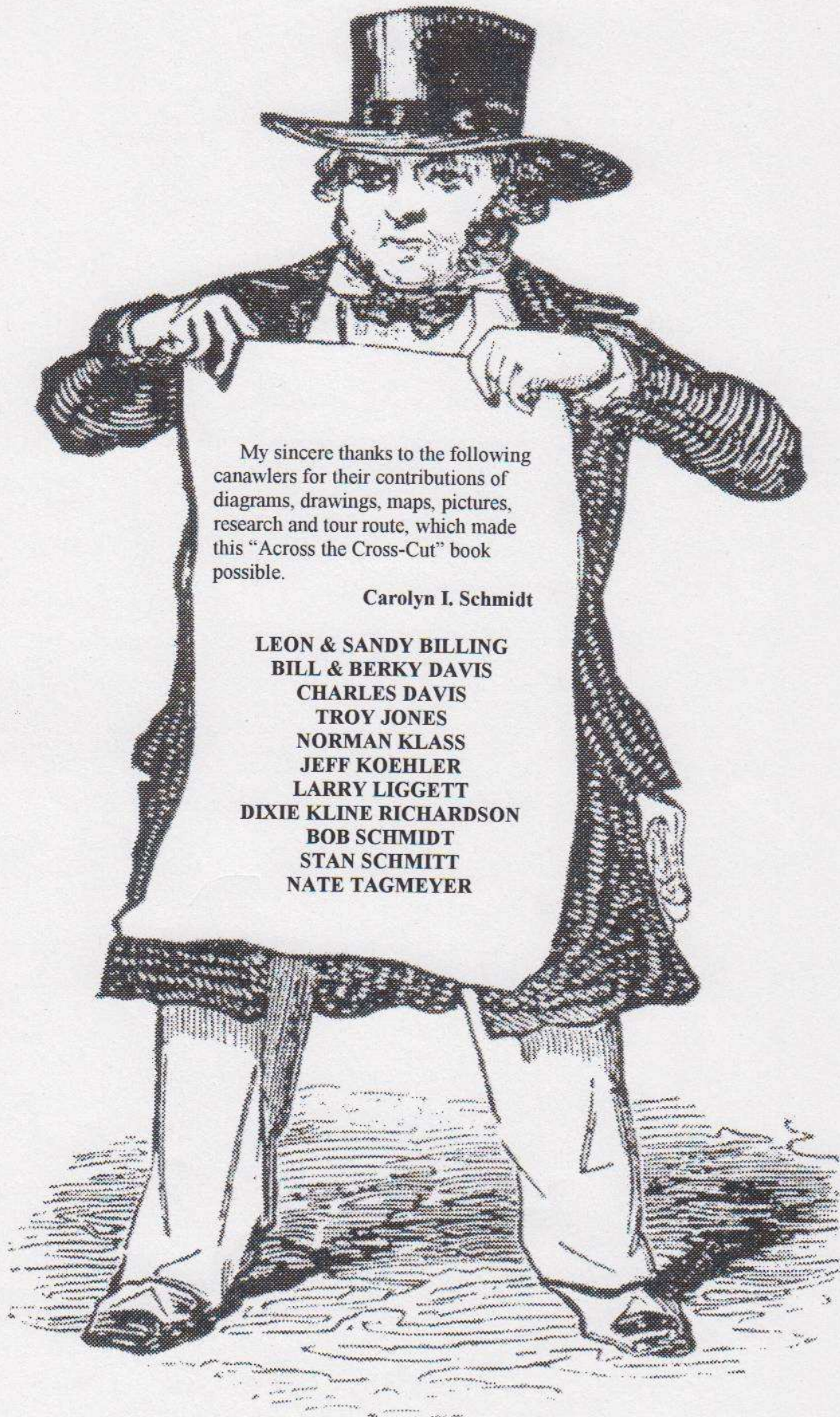


Linton, Indiana

"ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT"

Vigo / Clay / Greene
Counties

Canal Society of Indiana P.O. Box 40087 Fort Wayne, IN 46804

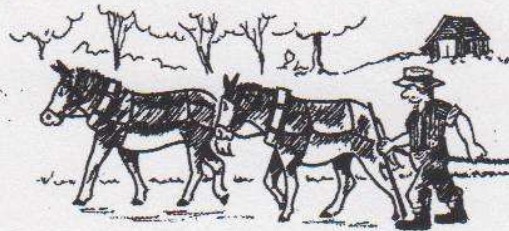
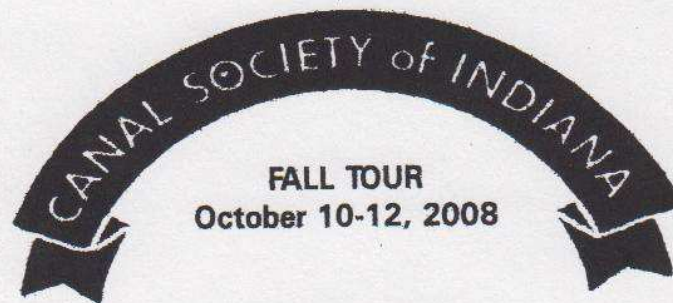


My sincere thanks to the following
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diagrams, drawings, maps, pictures,
research and tour route, which made
this "Across the Cross-Cut" book
possible.

Carolyn I. Schmidt

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**WABASH & ERIE CANAL
CROSS-CUT
VIGO, CLAY & GREENE
COUNTIES, INDIANA**



Linton, Indiana

"ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT"

**EDITOR:
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FOREWORD

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT

Each tour given by the Canal Society of Indiana attempts to relate the history of the canal and point out the location of its structures in a particular area of Indiana or in a neighboring state. The tours also include other canal related buildings and the early history of the counties and towns being toured.

The Cross-Cut Canal was part of the Mammoth Internal Improvement Bill of 1836. As planned, it was to be the link between the Wabash & Erie Canal, which was being extended from Lafayette to Terre Haute, and the Central Canal, which was to come from Peru through Indianapolis to Evansville. The 42-mile Cross-Cut crosses a summit of 79 feet and takes the Wabash & Erie Canal from Terre Haute to Point Commerce (Worthington) and continues on to Evansville. Earlier surveys had shown that the Wabash River south of Terre Haute had a broad flood plain making any canal on its banks impractical and the canal route needed to be moved from the Wabash River valley to the White River valley. The Wabash River itself had small rapids (Grand Rapids) south of Vincennes making even steamboat travel difficult in summer. The 1836 Bill also provided funding to build a lock around this navigational barrier in the river.

The watering of the Cross-Cut was designed to provide sufficient flow for just the 42 miles. Additional water for below Point Commerce was to be provided from the Central Canal. When the Central Canal did not materialize, the water source from Eel River Dam was insufficient without reservoirs at Splunge Creek and later Birch Creek.

The whole Cross-Cut canal became part of the 1847 settlement with the bond holders when the Wabash & Erie Canal was turned over to a private trust that was required to complete the Wabash & Erie Canal to Evansville. This lower division was completed by 1853, only to be abandoned by 1861.

The Cross-Cut is complicated to understand from both an engineering standpoint and the sequence of events from 1836-1861. This tour will seek to provide participants a thorough understanding of how, where and why this section became so important to the Wabash & Erie Canal. It is appropriate that our tour begins in Linton, which was named for a Terre Haute merchant and Wabash & Erie fund commissioner who died in the service to the canal at Philadelphia in 1835.

Welcome aboard!

Carolyn I. Schmidt



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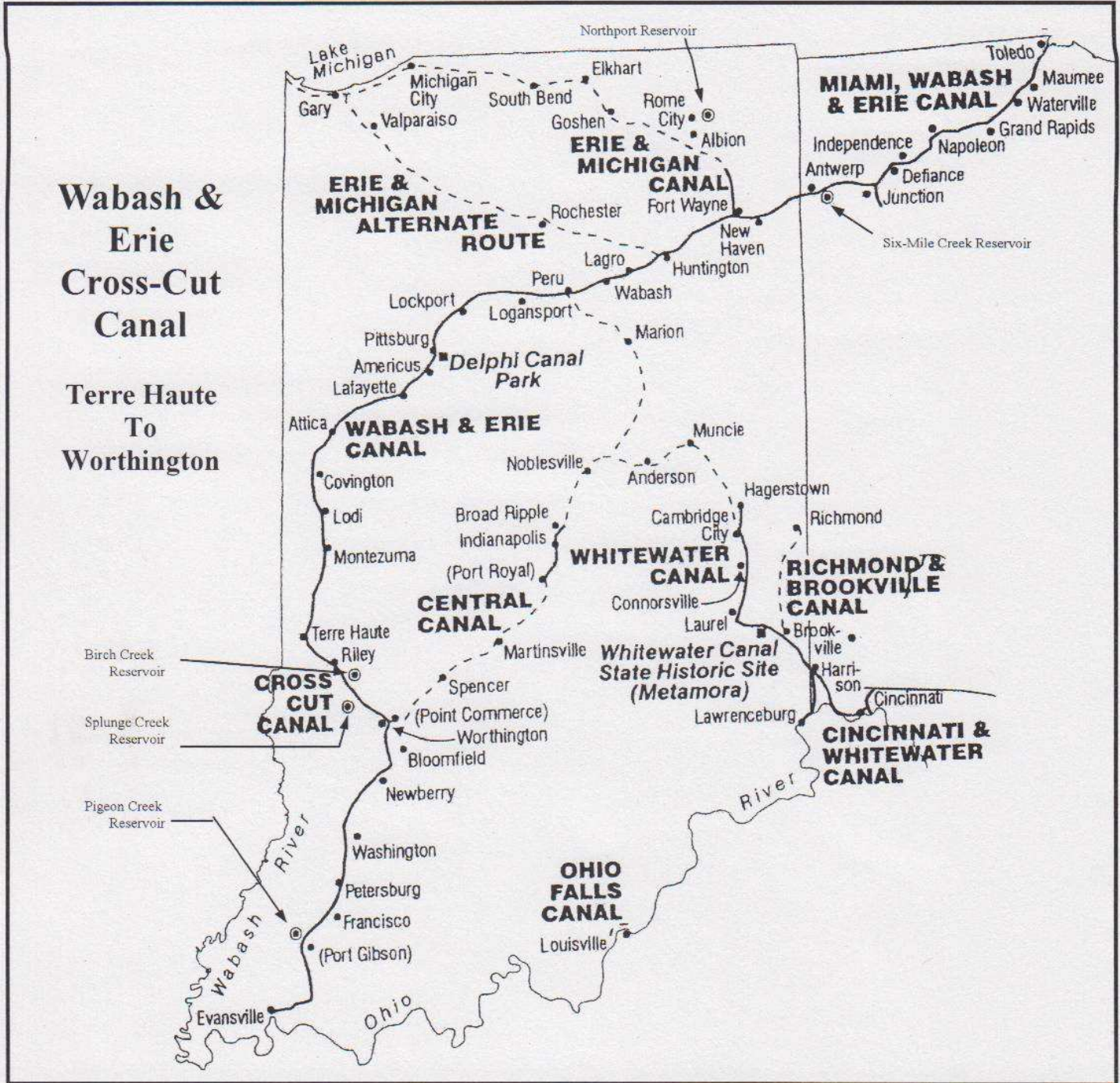
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Nate Tagmeyer

WELCOME ABOARD!

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL



Wabash & Erie Cross-Cut Canal 1836-1861 (42 miles)

A cross-cut canal is one that links two canals across a watershed summit. Indiana's Cross-Cut Canal was authorized by the Mammoth Internal Improvement Act of January 27, 1836. Originally it was planned to link the Wabash & Erie Canal, which was being extended from Lafayette to Terre Haute, and the Central Canal, which was to pass through Indianapolis and extend down the White River valley at Point Commerce

(Worthington).

Work began at the summit level on the Eel River feeder in 1836 but was abandoned after the financial panic of 1837-39. This original work was owned by the State of Indiana

This waterway between Terre Haute and Worthington, Indiana, which connected the Wabash and White Rivers, lifted canal waters 79 feet over a summit level. The Eel River feeder, the Splunge Creek Reservoir and eventually the Birch Creek Reservoir supplied water

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

to the Cross-Cut.

The following report written around 1836 describes a survey of the Cross-Cut Canal. When built changes were made in the number of structures and locations to this original survey .

Owing to the pressing engagements and duties in other parts of the State, which could not be postponed, the examinations of this line were not commenced until the 10th of July. About that period the preliminary examination and surveys, necessary to a final location were commenced by Mr. Wm. J. Ball, the resident engineer acting under the direction of the acting commissioner.

In commencing these surveys, it was thought proper in the first place to examine with great care the summit ridge dividing the waters of Eel River from those of the Wabash in order to ascertain certainly whether a depression could not be found lower than the one thru which the former line was run. A level was carried along the summit of the ridge for several miles both north and south from the line, but without finding any point so low as that followed by the former survey.

Having thus determined the route of the canal at the summit, an important question was presented in reference to the precise level upon which the canal should be constructed thru the summit ridge. In ordinary cases it is desirable to avoid deep cutting on account of the cost, both of construction and repairs; yet in this case the object to be gained by depressing the level was deemed sufficient to justify a cut of considerable magnitude, not only the length and consequently the cost of the feeders diminished, but at every foot which the summit level is depressed, two feet of lockage is saved. Critical comparative estimates were made upon several different levels, embracing both the feeder and main line, by which it was ascertained that the most economical arrangement would be that which would require **18 feet cutting** at the highest point. This depth, however, continues but for a short distance and is reduced by a gradual descent to 6 feet in a distance of 80 chains at the east end and in a distance of 40 chains at the west end. Through a portion of the summit cut embracing about 60 chains of the deepest part, soft sandstone rock in thin strata is found at a level varying [varying] from 1 to 6 feet above bottom of canal. This rock it is supposed will not be difficult to excavate and when it is collected that the liability to slides, — common to deep cuttings - will be measurably removed thereby, its occurrence is not much to be regretted.

In extending the location eastward from the deep cut, the summit level is maintained to a point about one mile west of Eel River for purposes of receiving a feeder from that stream. In progressing westward the level terminates immediately after passing the deep cut, making the whole length of the summit level 7 miles 40 chains.

From the summit westwardly the line passes down a branch of Honey Creek to the main valley of that stream and thence along this valley towards Terre Haute.

The total lockage from the summit to the proposed basin at Terre Haute is 61 feet, which is overcome by 7 locks [Original plans were for a deeper cut, 18 feet, at the summit level. Plans were changed to add 2 locks totaling 9 locks to overcome 79.2 feet from the summit to the basin.] distributed to suit the inclination of the country. Both main Honey Creek and Little Honey Creek are to be crossed on this part of the line, the former by an arch of 26 feet chord and the latter of 15 feet chord, to be built of stone. Lost Creek will probably require two arches of 16 feet chord.

Several sites were examined for the proposed feeder dam, amongst which that at Hoffman's was thought to combine the greatest advantages and was, therefore, selected. The feeder to conduct the waters of Eel River from this dam will be 5 miles and 44 chains in length. The heavy embankment in and near the valley of Birch Creek which is crossed by the feeder will be the principal item of expense.

The dam will be raised to a height of 15½ feet above low water and will be 180 feet in length. No rock has been discovered in the bed of the river. A firm foundation can however, be formed of brush and timber, which will be submerged and therefore rendered durable by a second dam, which will hereafter be built at Rawley's Mill, 6 miles below for the supply of the lower levels of the Canal. By direction of the Acting Commissioner, an important change has been made in the location at and near Terre Haute, by passing on the east side of the town and connecting with the Wabash and Erie Canal as surveyed by Dr. Whippo near Ft. Harrison thereby, avoiding the high embankment along the margin of the Wabash River, which would be much exposed to injury from floods.

The supply of water, which is the most important question connected with this canal remains to be considered. The total length of line which must draw its supply from the summit level, including both the feeder and the mainline from the mouth of feeder to Ft. Harrison will be about 27 miles. Some small portion of this line will expend less than the ordinary allowance of water, while the greater part of it will require the usual quantity. The line at or near the deep cut follows for some distance the very lowest ground to be found in that vicinity - the country on both sides inclining towards the canal. Under these circumstances the water of the country must naturally tend towards the canal and there can be but little loss of water, except by evaporation, which is believed to form a small part of the expenditure common to canals.

The calculations of demand and supply for this line may be stated as follows:

3 miles of line at or near the summit cut will require, say	
25 Cu. Ft. per minute per mile	75 Cu. Ft.
Remaining 24 miles may require the usual allowance of	
100 Cu. Ft. per minute per mile for leakage and evaporation	2400 Cu. Ft.
Lockage water for passage of 50 boats per day with locks of 6	
foot lift	562 Cu. Ft.
Allowance for leakage thru dam, say	<u>100 Cu. Ft.</u>

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

Total per minute per mile **3,137 Cu. Ft.**

To meet the demand we have no other resource than Eel River, which by careful measurement taken at different times during the past summer, was found to discharge as follows, viz:

August 2	6281 Cu. Ft per minute			
August 30	2969 " " " "			
September 3	2639 " " " "			
September 4	10000 " " " "	(Swollen by rain)		

By reference to the date of these measurements it will be seen that they embrace the seasons of the greatest drought. They show a deficiency of **498 Cu. Ft. per minute** for a period of 8 or 10 days during the greatest depression of the stream. The stream on the 3rd of September was supposed, by those acquainted with it, to be at the lowest stage; yet it is safer to conclude that the deficiency in season of great drought will be continued for a greater number of days than is shown by this statement.

Whatever deficiency there may be in the natural flow of the stream can be readily and cheaply provided by raising the feeder dam and the guard bank connected with it, 2 or 3 feet above the surface of the water in the summit level and by this means, retaining a small portion of the surplus waters of the stream to be drawn out when its natural flow shall be found inadequate. The extent and sufficiency of our resources here may be seen by the following statement.

The dam will form a pool of about 12 miles in length, following the windings of the stream which, allowing the channel to average 2½ chains wide, will give an area in the bed of the stream alone, of 240 acres. To which may be added the overflowed ground at the mouth of Turkey Run and other small streams and depressions — say 100 acres.

Total area of pool.....340 acres.

When supposing the dam to be raised 2 feet will give 29,620,800 Cu Ft. of available water equal to a constant supply of 514 Cu. Ft. per minute for 40 days.

Reservoirs were essential in keeping canal water level. Rivers and streams, whose waters were dammed and diverted into the canal, were not always capable of providing enough water in the summer time during dry periods. By constructing reservoirs, water could also be diverted into them when water supplies were high and stored until it was needed. The Cross-Cut Canal needed reservoirs since it had a summit level and had to keep the canal watered both to the north and to the south. However, at first only the Splunge Creek Reservoir was built, the assumption being that the Eel River Feeder would adequately water the canal to the north and also feed water into the Splunge Creek Reservoir at the weir.

Begun in 1836 and owned by the State of Indiana, the Cross-Cut works were abandoned in 1839. On July 31, 1847 the canal passed into the hands of private bond holders and was headquartered at Terre Haute. This meant that the new construction was under

private ownership and was now part of the Wabash & Erie Canal extension to Evansville. William J. Ball became the chief engineer for this portion of the work. Thomas Blake was the canal administrator. Both of the men had headquarters in Terre Haute.

Work started again on May 24, 1848 with new contractors. After sitting idle for 10 years much of the original work had begun to decay and had to be replaced.

Canal Reservoirs

The Wabash & Erie Canal required five reservoirs to keep it operational. Six-mile Creek Reservoir was located in Antwerp, Ohio, with the other four being in Indiana. The Northport Reservoir at Rome City, now known as Sylvan Lake, was constructed for the proposed Erie & Michigan Canal, which was begun but never completed. The other three were built between Terre Haute and Evansville with the Splunge Creek Reservoir and eventually the Birch Creek Reservoir being created for the Cross-Cut and the Pigeon Creek Reservoir being built in Gibson county for the Wabash & Erie Canal when it took over the 20 miles of Central Canal built north out of Evansville.

On the Cross-Cut canal boats coming from Terre Haute had to lock up 79.2 feet to the summit and then down 163.5 feet to Evansville. Each time a lock operated it required up to 100,000 gallons of water depending on its lift. Without a reservoir this lockage would not have been possible in the summer months.

Citizens, mostly farmers, who were located near the reservoir felt that it would breed diseases such as Malaria. They protested when they learned it was to be built. But their concerns fell on deaf ears.

In the "Chief Engineer's Report to the Board of Trustees of the Wabash & Erie Canal" on December 6, 1849, the state of completion of Splunge Creek Reservoir as well as their projection of its ability to provide the necessary water was given as follows:

The Splunge Creek Reservoir, situated twenty miles south of Terre Haute, which is relied upon to furnish water for the canal thence to the crossing of White river, during the dry season, is nearly finished, and may be filled to the required depth in time for the next season's navigation. The area of this reservoir, when full, will be 3,873 acres, as ascertained by accurate survey, and when drawn down to the level of the canal, may cover about 2000 acres, giving a mean area of near 3000 acres. The depth available is 7 feet. Allowing its surface to be depressed 2 feet during the dry season, by the excess of evaporation and filtration over the depth of falling water thereon, we have still 5 feet available, which gives 653,400,000 cubic feet as the quantity of water which may be drawn out for the use of the canal. This will

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

List of bidders to whom contracts were awarded on the Cross-Cut of the Wabash & Erie Canal between Terre Haute & Point Commerce

No. of Section Names of Bidders

163. O. Bird & Co.	29. Seaman & Crook	60. John Bodly & Co.
164. Miller Beard & Co.	30. Flinn & Flinn	61. John Bodly & Co.
165. Miller Beard & Co.	31. Seaman & Crook	62. John Bodly & Co.
1. Walter & Knight	32.	63. Curtis Holmes & Co.
2. John S. Walters	33.	64. Leveret Bradley Est.
3. King & Stewart	34.	65. Leveret Bradley Est.
4. King & Stewart	35.	66. John Stewart Est.
5.	36.	67. Solomon Cline Est.
6. Miller Benits & Co.	37. Flinn & Flinn	68. John Bodley & Co.
7. King & Stewart	38. John Bodly & Co.	69. Bird & Cummings
8. Baily & Wasterhouse	39. Edwin Gartrell	70. James Kinney Est.
9.	40. William Meldrum & Co.	71. W. W. Hayes, J. S. Freeman
10.	41. Fainbten, Dennis & Martin	72. James S. Freeman Est.
11.	42. Talmadge & Story	73. J. Murphy
12.	43. Ralph Wilson	74. S. & D. Parker
13. Beard & Erisman	44. John Stewart Est.	75. S. & D. Parker
14.	45. George Bourne Est.	76. Curtis Holmes & Co.
15.	46. Ferriter & O'Connor	77. A. M. K. Groves & Co. Est.
16. Joseph Cooker Est.	47. Cornelius Cokely	78. James Kelley
17.	48. Bevans & Ragan Est.	79. S. & D. Parker
18. O. Bird & Co.	49. Bevans & Ragan Est.	80. S. Coffee & Co.
19.	50. David Bell & Son	Feeder
20.	51. Curtis Homes & Co.	Gap H. & J. Hermling
21.	52. L. Bradley	Feeder Basin Cornelius Ferrel
22.	53. Hutchinson & McCall	Sec. 2 Stewart & Knight
23. James Strang Est.	54. Gallaher & Gallispie Est.	4 Stewart & Knight
24. James Strang Est.	55. Gallaher & Gallispie Est.	7 Stewart & Knight
25. William Story	56. Hutchinson & McCall	8 Ruggles & Ruggles
26. William Story	57. Hutchinson & McCall	10 Ferriter & Connor
27.	58. Hutchinson & McCall	11 Ferriter & Connor
28. A. M. K. Groves & Co.	59. McDonnell & Beaty Est.	Old Line



Awards of Contracts at the Canal at Point Commerce

November 15th, 1848

Section No. Names of bidders

81. Lames Gallagan & Co.	91. James S. Freeman	101. Clark & Ragan
82. Solomon Clune	92. James Byrnes	102. White & Murray
83. J. L. Allison, Hanchett & Co.	93. Hugh Fulton	103. H. G. Hermling
84. J. L. Allison, Hanchett & Co.	94. Gallagher & Walters	104. John & J. Tarvin
85. Patrick Kinney & Co.	95. James Byrnes	105. Calvin & Kirk
86. Robert Lowry & Co.	96. James Adams & Co.	W. River Dam and slack water T
87. Hugh Fulton	97. Michael Hamington	Path Knight - Stewart Knight
88. Hugh Fulton	98. Embree & Rowine	Patoka Rock Section Lamb Hannan
89. Hugh Fulton	99. H. & J. Hermling	& Co. Tom Donovan
90. James Byrnes	100. Robert Lowry	

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

furnish a continuous supply of 3,781 cubic feet per minute for 120 days — the period in each year during which the natural flow of Eel river, may not more than equal the demand for the summit and the line thence to Terre Haute. The length of canal dependant upon this reservoir being 34 miles, it will be seen that the supply is abundant. The reservoir surface being 5 feet below the level of Eel river feeder, it can be filled from that source whenever the drainage of Splunge Creek shall prove inadequate.

The Cross-Cut Canal was finally completed in 1850 as part of the Wabash & Erie Canal. On July 18, 1850 an Evansville newspaper reported on its completion as follows:

We have taken some pains to ascertain the progress now being made in the construction of the Evansville division of the Wabash & Erie Canal. We had the pleasure about the first of

June, of announcing that an important division of forty-two miles, between Terre Haute and Point Commerce, had been completed and the water let into it. We have now a continuous canal - the whole line in fine navigable order - from Toledo to Point Commerce (Worthington), Indiana, a distance of three hundred and fifty-two miles. Point Commerce is one hundred and ten miles from Evansville on the Ohio river, the southern terminus of the Wabash and Erie Canal -- the longest Canal in the United States. The southern division from Point Commerce to Evansville, a distance of one hundred and ten miles - is in rapid process of construction.

In 1853, Jesse Lynch Williams, chief engineer of the Wabash & Erie Canal reported to the Indiana General Assembly about the canal's structures as follows on the next page:

Begun in 1836

**Work resumed
May 24, 1848**

Completed 1850



**First boat to
Worthington
June 7, 1850**

**Abandoned
1861**

CROSS-CUT CANAL STATISTICS

Length through counties

Vigo	17 miles
Clay	21 miles
Greene	4 miles
Total:	42 miles 7 chains (1 chain = 66 feet)

Miles between		Total
Terre Haute to Riley	12	12
Riley to Clay Co.	5	17
Clay Co. to Eel River Feeder	8	25
Eel River Feeder to Greene/Owen Co. Ln.	13	38
Greene/Owen Co. Ln. to Worthington	4	42 miles long
Worthington to White River	13	34 miles from Splunge Creek Reservoir
Slackwater to Newberry	4	

County	No. of Locks / Lift	Aqueducts	Reservoirs
Vigo	9 79 ft.	1 Honey Creek	0
Clay	5 37 ft.	1 Birch Creek Feeder	1 Birch Crk 1 Splunge Crk
Owen	0	0	0
Greene	0	0	0

Summit level length

Riley Lock 49 to Eel River Feeder Lock 50 = 7 3/4 miles

Water flow

The Eel River and Birch Creek Reservoir feeds the Summit Level (north & south)
Weir allows excess water flow into Splunge Creek Reservoir
Splunge Creek Reservoir only feeds south toward Worthington

Summary of Locks on the Cross-Cut Canal

Lock Number	Lift in feet	Type
Terre Haute		
41/42	19.2	timber crib
43	8.5	timber crib
44	8.5	timber crib
45	9.0	timber crib
46	8.5	stone
47	8.5	stone Riley Canal Park
48	8.0	timber crib
Riley		
49	9.0	timber crib
Blue Hole Summit 7 3/4 miles		
Eel River Feeder 5 1/2 miles		
Birch Creek Reservoir 1000 acres		
Birch Creek Feeder 4 miles		
Splunge Creek Reservoir 3873 acres		
50	8.0	timber crib
51	8.0	timber crib
Kossuth		
52	7.1	timber crib
Gallaghers		
53	6.6	timber crib
Ragans		
54	7.0	timber crib

WABASH & ERIE CANAL 1853 ENGINEER'S REPORT
CROSS-CUT CANAL - TERRE HAUTE TO POINT COMMERCE (WORTHINGTON)

Current information has been added in bold type to help locate the sites of these structures. This is followed by the information from the original engineer's report in regular type. Please note that the engineer notes bridges in towns or by mills as "Bridge" and outside of towns as "Road Bridge." Also note that structures on the Cross-Cut Canal have been numbered where those at the reservoirs or on the feeder canals are not numbered.

The following excerpt begins at the weir on the nadir level where the canal waters flowing north from the Cross-Cut Canal meet the waters flowing south from the Wabash & Erie Canal and then tumble into the Wabash River at Terre Haute, Vigo county. It continues through Clay county, crosses the summit level and proceeds to Point Commerce (Worthington) in Greene county.

Vigo County

Waste weir at Terre Haute basin

Waste weir in basin at Terre Haute, consisting of a culvert under the towpath, 40 feet long, 4 by 2 feet in the clear; foundation, 3 inch plank, covering first 2 inch plank, and then 6 inch timbers.

The culvert is joined to a head wall of timbers 18 feet long, planked on the lower side. The wing walls on the upper side are braced apart to keep the slope of the embankment from running into the mouth of the culvert; foundation of culvert 12 feet B. The water is passed through by one cast iron slide gate, working in a cast frame 2 feet square; stem of gate an iron rod 2 3/4 inches round, with screw at top to raise and lower the same. A short distance below the culvert there is a tumble fall about 6 feet which the water runs into the Wabash River. Lower end of culvert and tumble well protected with stone.

Bridge No. 92

Bridge No. 92, double track, on First street in Terre Haute

Bridge No. 93

Bridge No. 93, on Second street, at foot of locks

Locks No. 41 and 42

Locks No. 41 and 42 in Terre Haute, together having 19.2 feet lift, are built of timber on the crib plan, being combined so that three sets of gates answer for both locks.

Bridge No. 94

Bridge No. 94 on Market street, Terre Haute

Bridge No. 95

Bridge No. 95, pivot, on Lafayette road, Terre Haute

Bridge No. 96

Bridge No. 96 on Fourth street, Terre Haute

Bridge No. 97

Bridge No. 97, pivot, on Fifth street, Terre Haute

Bridge No. 98

Bridge No. 98, on Sixth street, Terre Haute

Bridge No. 99

Bridge No. 99, on county road north of Prairie House

Bridge No. 100

Bridge No. 100, double track, on Chestnut street, Terre Haute.

Bridge No. 101

Bridge No. 101, double track, on National Road, Terre Haute

Bridge No. 102

Bridge No. 102, road and tow-path, on Bloomington road, Terre Haute

Culvert No. 148 Visible at low water

Culvert No. 148, old channel of Lost Creek, length 101 feet, one space 10 by 1 1/2 feet, ends of covering and top planked

Road bridge No. 103

Road bridge No. 103 at Dean's

Road bridge No. 104

Road bridge No. 104, on Louisville road

Road bridge No. 105

Road bridge No. 105, half mile south of Louisville road

Road bridge No. 106

Road bridge No. 106, at Ishmael Pugh's

Waste wier

Waste wier in berm bank, at Church's Run

Culvert No. 149

Culvert No. 149, Church's Run; length 98 feet, two spaces 10 by 2 feet clear, top of culvert 3 feet B

Lock No. 43

Lock No. 43, of 8 1/2 feet lift, situated four miles south of Terre Haute, is built of timber on the crib plan. The foundation timbers, 12 inches thick, are laid six inches

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

apart on average. Fifteen and a half feet in length, measuring from the upper end, and 31 feet in length measuring from the lower end, are of timbers 36 feet long. Three sticks in the chamber are of the same height, the remainder being 18 feet long.

The cribs are 10 feet wide from out to out, the front and back walls being connected by round ties dove-tailed at both ends. On each side there are six posts and braces, placed against the back wall to prevent the cribs settling inwards. The second stick from the bottom of the back wall projects inward two inches, on to which the posts are notched and prevented from rising. Back of the back wall there are two courses of round timber connected with the back wall by round ties, more effectual to prevent settling inwards. Within the chamber and about the upper gates, the foundation is covered with two courses of 2 inch oak plank, the sides with one course. Foundation planking secured with wrought spikes 3/8 inch square and 10 inches long, sides with 6 inch cut spikes.

Road bridge No. 107
Road bridge No. 107

Lock No. 44
Lock No. 44, of 8½ feet lift, a short distance from No. 43. Built on the crib plan as above described.

Culvert No. 150
Culvert No. 150, length 94 feet, one space, 10 by 1½ fet, top 2 feet B.

Culvert No. 151 Foundation timbers of this culvert were unearthed in 2007 and removed from the bed of Little Honey Creek for a bypass being built around Terre Haute.
Culvert No. 151, Little Honey Creek, cut stone arch 15 feet chord, timber foundation extending across the channel of creek and full length of culvert.

Culvert No. 152
Culvert No. 152, length 102 feet, one space 14 by 2¾ feet clear. Top of culvert 4½ feet B.

Road bridge No. 108
Road bridge No. 108, county road

Lock No. 45
Lock No. 45 of 9 feet lift, built of timber on the crib plan.

Culvert No. 153
Culvert No. 153, length 98 feet, one space 10 by 1½ feet.

Road bridge No. 109
Road bridge No. 109, tow-path attached thereto.

Louisville road.
Lock No. 46
Lock No. 46, of 8½ feet lift, cut stone masonry.

Aqueduct No. 14
Aqueduct No. 14, Honey Creek, consists of one middle span of 40 feet, and two end spans of 27 feet each. The string timbers of the trunk are supported by two strong bents, and timber abutments at the end; the bents stand on foundation timber extending across the channel of the creek.

Lock No. 47 Riley Lock, by town of Riley, park being planned
Lock No. 47, of 8½ feet lift, cut stone masonry. This is the best lock in the State of Indiana, it was built by Robert Logan, of Pike county.

Culvert No. 154 Timber visible in stream bed
Culvert No. 154, 94 feet long, one space 10 by 1½ feet, top of culvert 2 feet B.

Road bridge No. 110
Road bridge No. 110, at Lockport

Lock No. 48 Still some timbers visible
Lock No. 48, of 8 feet lift, timber, on crib plan.

Lock No. 49 Timbers still visible
Lock No. 49, of 9 feet lift, at the north end of Eel River summit, built of timber, on crib plan.

Culvert No. 155
Culvert No. 155, a short distance above Lock No. 50 (editors note - it should be 49), crosses canal on an angle of about 45 degrees. Length 152 feet, one space 12 by 2 feet clear, top of culvert 6 feet B.

Tow-path bridge
Tow-path bridge, half mile above Lock No 50 (49).

Road bridge No. 111
Road bridge No. 111, on road across deep cut.

Watered section at Deep Cut south of Riley

Culvert No. 156
Culvert No. 156, south end Eel river summit, 94 feet long, one space 12½ by 2 feet clear, top of culvert 2 feet B, covering held down by long bolts.

Clay County

Culvert No. 157 Big Slough remains uncovered, visible at low water
Culvert No. 157. Large branch running into reservoir; length 116 feet; two spaces 11 by 2 feet clear; top of

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

culvert 8.3 feet B.

Culvert No. 158 Little Slough

Culvert No. 158. Length 111½ feet; one space 10 by 1½ feet clear; top of culvert 7 feet B.

Waste wier

Waste wier at mouth of Eel river feeder, to draw water from the canal, and to fill the Splunge Creek reservoir, as occasion may require. This structure is built of timber. It consists, first, of two abutments, 50 feet apart, built in the form of an L - the lower side being stepped off to correspond with the slope of the embankment. The foundation consists, first, of two sticks of timber, 10 inches square, laid in the direction of the tow-paths, 7 feet apart - the lower side of the upper one corresponding with the upper face of the abutments. Along this upper stick there is sheet piling, 4 feet long, extending to end opening of abutment 10½ feet each side.

On these lower sill there are nine cross timbers for sills of bents notched down, leaving the projections above 6 inches. The space between the cross timbers is filled with foundation timbers 6 inches thick. The timbers are 25½ feet long, extending 5 feet above the upper sill, and an additional course of sheet piling is put in all around the upper end of the foundation, connecting with the first course along the wings of the abutment. The joints in the bents are placed at 4 feet A, affording a spill over the waste wier of about 40 feet. There are two gates, 5½ feet long, raised by rollers and chains - gates suspended by iron bars working from centers at upper edge of foundation. foundation planks, as also abutments. Top of foundation 1 feet B.

Eel River Feeder Dam, Some timbers & stones visible at low water

Eel River Feeder Dam. This dam is 264 feet long and 16½ feet high, from low water. The bed of Eel river at this point, for most of the distance across, is a loose sand, requiring great care and much expense to build a permanent dam. A dam of 180 feet in length, with abutments and guard lock of cut stone, was built by the State at this point, but by neglect the water was permitted to wear a hole through the embankment back of the western abutment, which soon let the whole volume of the river pass around the dam, resulting in the total destruction of the abutment and guard lock. In making the repairs it was concluded to extend the old dam 82 feet, and to modify its form by the addition of a crib and apron at the foot of the lower slope.

The brush and tree foundation is 100 feet wide, In the old part of the dam there are six courses of foundation trees, and in the new four courses. The crib at the foot of the lower slope is 6 feet high to the top of the covering timber of the same, giving a level apron of 13 feet. In other respects this dam is built on a similar

plan to that at Sugar creek and also at Coal creek. The west abutment and guard lock are of timber, built upon the ordinary plan.

Birch Creek Aqueduct, Some stones & earthwork visible

The Birch creek aqueuct, on the Eel river feeder, is a simple structure consisting of three spans of 27 feet, supported by timber bents and crib abutments. The trunk is 24 feet wide in the clear, and calculated for 4 feet water. The slopes of the banks are protected with stone. The abutments extend 4 feet below bottom of canal, and rest on a timber foundation.

Culvert at Pitt's Branch

The next structure on the feeder is a rectangular submerged timber culvert at Pitt's Branch. Two spaces 10 by 2 feet clear. Top of culvert 8¾ feet B. Length of culvert 117½ feet.

Road bridges

There are two road bridges on the (Eel River) feeder.

Birch Creek Reservoir and feeder from it to the Eel River feeder, Dam still visible, Parts of feeder canal still visible

Birch Creek reservoir and feeder from the same to the Eel River feeder.

Reservoir culvert and waste wier

Culvert for drawing out the water. This structure is similar in all respects to those already described, having four sliding gates for the passage of water. At the west end of the reservoir bank there is a waste wier 300 feet long, consisting of a foundation and breast wall with abutment, same plan as the Pigeon Creek waste wier.

Road bridges and culvert

Two road bridges on the (Birch Creek) feeder, and one small culvert built of timber and submerged

Locks Nos. 50 and 51, Some timbers visible

Locks Nos. 50 and 51. Near together; a short distance below the mouth of the Eel River feeder, each of 8 feet lift; built of timber on the crib plan. A tow path bridge is built over the lower end of the upper lock.

Culvert from Splunge Creek Reservoir, Dam still visible

The next structure is the culvert through which the water is drawn from Splunge Creek Reservoir into the canal. The work consists of a culvert 40 feet long, with two spaces of 8½ feet by 2 feet clear. A breast wall 14 feet high, of timbers twelve inches square and 32 feet long. On the reservoir side there are wings framed into the breast wall, stepping off to correspond with the slope, and braced apart to retain the embankment. A course of sheet piling extends along the first stick of breast wall its entire length connecting with the plank wall in the reservoir bank; and the culvert and breast

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

wall is well planked with two inch oak boards.

There are four cast iron sliding gates, working in cast frames, raised by wrought iron stems with screws at the top. This structure operates well, and appears to be entirely secure; but a small portion of it is subject to decay.

Road bridge No. 112

Road bridge No. 112; near the lower end of the reservoir.

Road bridge No. 113.

Road bridge No. 113.

Culvert No. 159 Watkin's Creek

Culvert No. 159. Length 111 ½ feet. Three spaces 12 by 3 feet clear. Top of the culvert 6 ½ feet B. Top and portion of sides of culvert planked with two inch boards.

Bridge No. 114

Bridge No. 114. At side of Hooker's Mill.

Road bridge No. 115.

Road bridge No. 115. At Kossuth.

Waste weir

Waste weir. Built on the same plan as that at the mouth of the Eel River feeder.

Lock No. 52.

Lock No. 52. Of 7.10 feet lift at Kossuth; built of timber on the crib plan.

Culvert No. 160.

Culvert No. 160. Length 136 feet. Two spaces 10 feet by 3 feet clear. Covering secured by iron rods through side timbers into the foundation. Covering of culvert and part of sides planked with two inch boards. Top of culvert 6 feet B.

Road bridge No. 116.

Road bridge No. 116.

Waste weir

Waste weir of timber, on the same plan as that at the mouth of the Eel River feeder.

Culvert No. 161. Prairie Creek

Culvert No. 161. Prairie Creek. Timber arch 15 feet chord clear. Length 100 feet from face to face. Foundation extending 4 feet beyond at each end. Ring 18 inches deep. Top of culvert 5.80 feet B.

Lock No. 53.

Lock No. 53. Of 6.6 feet lift. Just below Prairie Creek. Built on timber on the crib plan.

Road bridge No. 117.

Road bridge No. 117. Road to New Brunswick; short distance below lock.

Road bridge No. 118.

Road bridge No. 118. Road to New Brunswick.

Lock No. 54.

Lock No. 54. Of 7 feet lift. Built of timber on the crib plan.

Greene County

Culvert No. 162. Lagoon Creek

Culvert No. 162. Lake branch. Timber arch 20 feet chord. Length 93 feet. Ring 18 inches deep. Top of culvert 2 feet B.

Culvert No. 163.

Culvert No. 163. ¼ mile above Hubble's Mill. One space 10 by 1 ½ feet clear. Length of culvert 130 feet. Top of culvert 12 feet B. Top and part of sides of culvert planked with two inch oak boards.

Owen County -Johnstown

Road bridge No. 119.

Road bridge No. 119. At Hubble's Mill.

Greene County

Guard gates

Guard gates, to be used in floods, to prevent the water of the Eel River running down the Canal. This structure consists of two short cribs on a foundation of timber and planks. The gate lies flat below bottom of canal when not in use. When required, it is raised and held in its position by the pressure of the water. Paddles gates are provided to draw the water down when the gate is to be lowered.

Waste weir

Waste weir. 2 ½ miles above Worthington. This structure is built, in all respects, on the plan of that at the mouth of the Eel River feeder already described.

Culvert No. 164.

Culvert No. 164. Seaman's Creek. Three spaces 12 by 3 feet in the clear. Length 108 feet. Top of culvert 6 feet B.

Culvert No. 165.

Culvert No. 165. Just above West Point Commerce. Length of culvert 98 feet. One space 3 by 1 ½ feet clear. Top of culvert 3.1 feet B.

Road bridge No. 120.

Road bridge No. 120. Road to Point Commerce

Road bridge No. 121 and culvert.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

Road bridge No. 121. Across the canal at Worthington. Small culvert in berm bank passing water into the canal. state of decay.

Road bridge No. 122.

Road bridge No. 122. Louisville road, 1½ miles below Worthington. Small culvert in berm bank passing water into the canal.

Reservoirs Still A Problem

Responding to citizens' complaints that Splunge Creek Reservoir was a health hazard, the chief engineer and Dr. Ezra Reed went to the site, found things in fairly good order and recommended that only the timber on the margins be removed. Fishermen enjoyed fishing in this reservoir and all seemed to be going well with the canal operations until the summer dry season of 1853 when the Eel River's water level fell causing the canal to dry up. Thus the Eel River feeder and Splunge Creek Reservoir proved to be inadequate in supplying the necessary water for the Cross-Cut. Another reservoir was needed to supplement the other two sources. When the canal engineers decided to build Birch Creek Reservoir, which would cover approximately 1,000 acres, local residents protested again but were ignored. The Birch Creek Reservoir was built that fall and winter.

The Pigeon Creek Reservoir was the last one built on the southern portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal. It covered 1,500 acres and supplemented White river dam, which fed the lower 93 miles of the canal. Upon completion of the canal in 1853, a medical commission was appointed by Governor Joseph A. Wright to examine Splunge, Birch and Pigeon Creek reservoirs as to their possible effect on the health of the region.

The following report resulted:

State vs Board Trustees W. & E. Canal
Report of Physicians
Filed May 22nd, 1854
Geo. Pinckly Clk
Filed in my office
May 26th, 1854
Basil Meek Clerk
Box 130 File 2

To his Excellency Gov. Wright

The committee appointed by your honor under an Act of the Legislature of the 4th March 1853, to examine the Reservoirs of Clay and Gibson counties in the State of Indiana, having had the subject under consideration during the months of June and July, beg leave to submit the following as the result of their investigation.

Splunge Creek Reservoir Clay County

This body of water covers an area of about four thousand acres. One fourth of which is covered with timber in a

The grounds, now covered with the water of this Reservoir, were previous to inundation -- a low, wet, and swampy bottom, immediately adjacent to Eel River, which flooded it at every considerable rise. Near the center of this Reservoir was a pond which covered from twelve to fifteen hundred acres, which slowly dried away during the drier months of summer and left exposed a heavy alluvial deposit, which emitted a most offensive smell; at such times the inhabitants were sure to become the sufferers from intermittent and remittent fevers. The higher portion of these grounds were overgrown in summer with a most luxuriant growth of grass and vegetable matter from two to six feet high, this too was destroyed by the overflows and left to decay after the waters had subsided. All the lower places were left full of water to slowly dry away by evaporation and percolation.

These grounds have been covered with water now about three years and the water is pure and clear with the exception of that portion of it which surrounds the timber, which slightly colored from vegetable extracts, which can in no wise [way] contribute to the production of Malaria. The water in depth, ranges from a few inches to fifteen feet, and is in an almost constant state of agitation, which greatly favors its purification. At the North end of the embankment there is constructed a tumble passing part of the waters of Eel river Feeder into this Reservoir.

About the center of the embankment is the Bulkhead passing the water directly into the canal. Although Splunge Creek does not furnish running water during the dry season, yet the Reservoir is constantly in the receipt of fresh supplies of water. The amount of water discharged over that received from the Feeder is supposed to be about one half inch per twenty-four hours. The water passing over the tumble and the displacement both have a beneficial influence in preventing stagnation. The water seems perfectly free from all unpleasant odor and at no point does Malaria seem to be generated except around the exposed margin which is the portion left uncovered from the lowering of the water one half inch per twenty-four hours. When standing to the North East along the prairie side, there seems to be a decided pernicious influence exerted, none of which is attributable to the standing timber, which is on the South East border of the Reservoir.

Malaria or Miasmata has, at all times and under all circumstances, eluded the finest chemical analysis; and no manipulation, however delicate, has ever been able to detect its presence. We see vegetable matter under the combined influences of heat and moisture. We smell an unpleasant and offensive odor. We see in those exposed to these influences, intermittent and remittent diseases.

We say Malaria is the remote cause, but little more is known of it than that in certain localities emitting offensive odors certain diseases are prevalent. We call them Malarious. Experience proves that an excess of moisture suspends to a great extent the generation of this agent. And likewise an entire want of moisture stops the decay of vegetation; therefore Malaria ceases

to exist in those very places where a short time before the most pestilential diseases were prevailing. Timber standing or fallen divested of its foliage, can in no wise [way] contribute to the production of this agent. The decomposition of the ligneous fiber, can but resolve itself into its original gasses, carbon, hydrogen and oxygen, or into carbonic acid, hydrogen or light carbureted hydrogen. When the cellulose connection of timber is destroyed and the succulence dissipated, the drying process commences, and though moisture may be external applied, no Malaria can be the result. If the ligneous fibre resolves itself into its original gasses, and they are those mentioned, if they hold any connection whatever with Miasmata, why does not chemical analysis make the same manifest? In the most marshy and pestilential portions of Italy, where no man has ever slept without an attack, no more carbonic acid exists in the atmosphere than in the most salubrious climes. If carbonic acid was generated by an excess of moisture, a great portion of it would be absorbed by the water, while the light carbureted hydrogen generated under these circumstances when free, would ascend into the higher regions where no influence could be exerted upon the hygiene of the surrounding country. Carbonic acid, no doubt, may become an agent of disease when concentrated but not when slowly produced in the open air from the denudation of ligneous fibre.

If the timber in falling should stop at or near the surface of the water, footing would be given for the growth of moss and other aquatic plants, none of which, while living, can in the least contribute as causes of disease. They would be destroyed by the freezes of winter, and slowly decompose during the warmer periods of that portion of the year, but little deleterious influence would be existed. There seems to be no source of Malaria at this Reservoir except the exposed edge from the lower of the water; and this is but small in comparison to the previous state of those grounds.

It is the opinion of this committee that any body of fresh water receiving and discharging the same amount that this Reservoir does, and constantly kept in motion by the winds of that prairie country, could not alone, under the most adverse circumstances, become a source of disease.

We are of the opinion, after carefully comparing and investigation the present condition of this Reservoir, with its previous state, that there is far less cause of disease at present, than before the grounds were permanently submerged.

Birch Creek Reservoir, Clay County

The area of this Reservoir is about one thousand acres, not yet complete, which gave a fair opportunity to see the primitive state of those grounds. The soil is argillaceous and but little fitted for the escape of water by percolation. The surface is flat, covered with a layer of vegetable matter in a state of decay. The surface is subject to overflow from the creek and from any considerable rain. Numerous indentations partially filled with stagnant water strongly impregnated with vegetable matter in a most offensive condition are spread out all over the entire territory. The timber is heavy and composed of almost every variety of forest trees, under grown with brush and grass -- many places so thick that it is with difficulty penetrated. The heavy

growth of timber does to a certain extent prevent both the generation and spread of Malaria. The whole presents to the view a most ghastly appearance, having in its very midst the elements of the diseases most common to our country.

Will the submerging of these grounds exert a deleterious influence upon the hygiene of the surrounding country? If submerged in mid-summer when the foliage is upon the trees, and the grass growing upon the ground, there would be exerted for a time, a pernicious influence, but if submerged in the latter part of fall or winter, no direct evil influence would be generated.

What effect would follow from the complete removal of the timber? If the timber be cut away and the direct rays of the sun let in upon the surface in its present condition, an infinitely worse state of things would follow than from the submerging of the same grounds under the most unfavorable circumstances. By this process we expose vegetable matter, stagnant pool of water impregnated with vegetable matter, and an alluvial deposit, all the most favorable circumstances for the generation of Malarious poison.

Aside from that, the destruction of the timber will give free circulation to the atmosphere, and Malaria rapidly generated in this way, would spread with greater facility, and disease would be the impendent result. In all cases where heat and moisture are present in their proper proportions, the effect will be comparative to the relative state of decay. The more readily the substances enter into decomposition the greater will be the amount of deleterious agencies given off in a given time. Of all conditions favoring the rapid generation of a poisonous agent from decomposition, water impregnated with such vegetable products as most readily decompose, is the most favorable for the rapid generation of Miasma, especially when those pools are shallow and stagnant and motion and air are precluded.

In reference to the standing timber, in this, as in Splunge Creek Reservoir, it can have, in the opinion of the committee, no bad effect upon the health of the surrounding country.

From inquiry we learn that the greatest complaint against Splunge Creek Reservoir comes from regions, which decidedly are, and ever have been, pestilential and filled with Malarious diseases, at a distance from two to five miles from the Reservoir, which has claimed to be the great source of difficulty. There is between those persons and this body of water a dense forest, which all experience proves would act as a barrier to the spread of this poison. Then some occult cause must have been the exciting agent in this case and not the water of the Reservoir.

There is no doubt that, if the grounds of Birch Creek Reservoir were once cleared and then submerged with the timber standing, after a time all deleterious influences would be at an end; but while permitted to exist in its present condition time knows no termination to its pernicious influences, while heat and moisture are elements of decay. The free edges of this Reservoir are also being cleared of their timber, which can have but little good effect. Permanent submerging is all these grounds want to greatly improve the health of this immediate neighborhood.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

In reference to the feeder dam in Eel River all the bad effects that would probably result would be from the exposure of the sand and mud bars in the bed of the river below the dam. These no doubt, do exert an influence while undergoing the drying process. The difference between this and ordinary dams for milling purposes, is the water in this pond remained at the same level during a regular stage of water, keeping entirely submerged its overflowed banks, while small stream (of which most complaint is made) are subject to constant changes, thereby exposing alternately the sand and muddy bank to the direct rays of the sun.

Pigeon Creek Reservoir, Gibson County

This Reservoir covers an area of about fifteen hundred acres, partially filled with water, which presents a dark and filthy appearance not different however from the water in the creek itself beyond the influence of the Reservoir. The soil is thin argillaceous and covered with a layer of decaying vegetable matter, subject to inundation both from heavy rains and rises in the creek.

On the West extending North is a very marshy, wet swamp from two to six rods wide, and about three fourths of a mile in length. The partial filling of this Reservoir will be a disadvantage during the coming autumn, but when once filled will add greatly to the improvement of the hygiene of the country. The timber is heavy and comprises the major variety of the forest trees of this latitude, interspersed with undergrowth and grass. During the destruction of the foliage and grass soon after submerging these grounds, there will be a new source of Miasmata, ceasing however almost entirely when that crop is decayed. Not a greater amount of poisonous influence would result from this than from the clearing away of the timber, and to take the Reservoir in its present condition and drain it, which would have to be done before the timber could be removed, four-fold greater danger would result to the surrounding country than the complete inundation of the whole territory at the worst season of the year. When the great Reservoirs of Mercer County, Ohio was first constructed and partially filled, the people, fearing the consequences, met and opened the bank, the result was that, never in the history of the country, did disease become so common and fatal. The free surface of this Reservoir is also being cleared of timber, so that the rise and fall of six feet will not expose any grounds having on it standing timber. As the subject of standing timber has often been referred to we deem a further notice of it unnecessary.

The Committee after having finished their investigation of the Reservoirs of Clay and Gibson counties, had the privilege of inspecting some of the artificial lakes of Ohio. These Reservoirs have been constructed from twelve to fifteen years, when time sufficient has elapsed to see the practical effects of such collections of water the great Reservoir of Mercer county being the largest artificial lake in the world -- covering about seventeen thousand acres of land, nine thousand of which was a dense forest when submerged. Although great fears were entertained as to its effect upon the health of the country at the time, yet, all now freely acknowledge that it has been a decided advantage in point of health. Dr. Stevens, who has practiced

medicine for eighteen years in the vicinity of this body of water, says the health has gradually improved since the filling of the Reservoir. Mr. Sawyer, ex-member of Congress and the citizens living near all say without a dissenting voice that the hygiene of their country has been greatly improved by the construction of the Reservoir.

The topography of this region is not essentially different from that of Splunge Creek in Indiana, being wet and swampy previous to being submerged. Much of the timber is yet standing, although the Reservoir has been filled thirteen years. After falling it soon disappears and no appreciable influence is in the least traceable to it.

All our investigations in Ohio only go to confirm our previous opinions as to what will be the practical effects of those collections of water in the counties of Clay and Gibson, Indiana.

All of which is respectfully submitted
Indianapolis July 23, 1853
Joseph C. Cook, Chair
A.D. Gale Sect.
Jno. S. Ford
Samuel Grimes
Matthew Smith

The report was received by the governor. The document has a page attached that says:

Executive Department
Indianapolis April 3d, 1854
I, Joseph A. Wright, Governor of the State of Indiana, do certify, that the foregoing to be a true, full and complete copy of the Report of the Physicians appointed under the Act of the General Assembly, approved March 4, 1853.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name and caused to be affixed the Seal of said State, at Indianapolis, this day and year above written.

Joseph A. Wright

Those living near the reservoirs were still not satisfied by the report of the medical commission. Vandalism continued to occur on both of the reservoirs, canal banks and canal structures. Other citizens, whose businesses were compromised by these damages, condemned the Governor for not acting to prevent it. Even though the Birch Creek Reservoir in Clay County was most often the target, Evansville and Vanderburgh County residents were upset that the canal, which they had so long awaited and in which they had heavily invested, was often closed down by these events. They held meetings, made resolutions as to what they would or would not allow, created laws, and offered rewards for the capture of the vandals.

The following reports carried in Evansville newspapers clearly point out the events that took place and

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

how they effected those living far away from the vandalism:

Evansville Daily Journal
6-23-1854

"Terre Haute and Evansville Packet Line

"This line is now in full operation, and canal packets arriving and departing regularly three times a week. The company have excellent boats and good stock on the line. — We are gratified to learn that they are already being well patronized, and are proving a great convenience to our citizens, and to persons living along the line of the Canal. Mr. Price is agent for this city, and will soon have an office convenient to the packet landing, at the corner of Main street. All the boats on this line are under the direct control of experienced and clever canal men. - The Pennsylvania will leave this evening at 7 o'clock for Terre Haute. Those wishing a pleasant trip to that city, or to any intermediate point, would do well to take her. - These packets leave Evansville every Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings. An advertisement of the Company will be found in to-day's Journal."

Evansville Daily Journal
7-7-1854

Birch Creek Reservoir

The Terre Haute Journal contains an article on the recent lawless cutting away of the Birch Creek Reservoir on the W. and E. Canal, by which a thousand acres of water, ten feet deep, were lost or spread over the neighboring country. The importance of this Reservoir to the Canal, in view of the dry season, cannot be appreciated. It is to be hoped the villains who committed the deed may be arrested. The Journal says:

All business men who recollect the want of water last summer that fell on the Eel River Summit level will appreciate this calamity. A full supply has been stored up in the Reservoir for the approaching dry season, but by one act of midnight villainy, it is all gone. The breach will no doubt be immediately repaired, but at this late period there is little prospect of rains to fill the Reservoir for use this season.

It is supposed that a number of lawless men must have joined together in perpetrating this outrage. The shortest night of the year, (22nd June,) does not afford sufficient hours of darkness for the performance of so much hard labor by one or two men. A few months before the same bank was cut, but was discovered before a breach was made.

The Trustees have built this Reservoir at a cost of \$30,000 to supply the want of water South of this place, and to give to the citizens and business men *certain* navigation to Evansville. They have paid damages to the owners of the lands taken for the purpose, and settled every claim but one, and that

one by no means pressing. Everything that was reasonable has been done to satisfy those who live near the Reservoir, and it is difficult to conceive what could prompt this act of wanton destruction of a great and valuable public work. This Reservoir is absolutely Necessary to the very existence of the Canal South to Evansville, and the Trustees have no choice but to maintain and keep it up.

Evansville Daily Journal
7-12-1854

The Canal.

We learn that the Canal is now in good navigable order to Terre Haute, there being plenty of water the whole distance. The packet Pennsylvania arrived here Monday morning, under command of Capt. Sherra, and left that evening for Terre Haute. The P. G. O'Riley will leave this evening at 7 o'clock for the same place. Her accommodations will be found, excellent, and Capt. W. H. Robinson a most accommodating gentleman.

The cutting away of the Birch Creek Reservoir has had no effect on the navigation of the Canal, as we had been led to understand it would. This Reservoir has never been used to feed the canal, but has been kept as a reserve pond of water, to be used in case of Croy's Creek, which feeds the canal just below Terre Haute, going dry. Happily that creek has afforded and now affords a sufficient supply of water for the canal. We understand a large force of men were at once put to work to repair the break in the Reservoir, and it is now completed.

The report which has been in circulation, that the present line of packets was to be discontinued, is entirely untrue. A new towpath agent has been employed. All the receipts of these packets will be placed in his hands to purchase stock, keep the packets in repairs, &c., &c. Mr. Pendleton P. Price, the resident agent in this city, has his office now at Geo. Foster & Co.'s large warehouse, where he will attend to the receipt and shipment of packages of freight, selling tickets and attending to the business of the line generally.

Evansville Daily Journal
8-18-1854

The Canal.

The Big Creek Aqueduct has again broken, and in an entirely different place from the old break. But Mr. Lawrence, the engineer, has a large force on it, who have been at work some little time, and it is anticipated the aqueduct will be repaired by next Monday. Two heavy forces of men are at work at these, and unless new breaks occur the Canal will be in good running order again by next Monday. These breaks have been caused by the extreme dry and hot -weather causing the banks to crack open. — Mr. Lawrence, the acting engineer at this end of the canal, is active and industrious. We can say from our personal knowledge that he is always on the alert, and loses no energy nor labor to keep the Canal in good order. He intends to have it ready for the use of the Petersburg convention.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

Evansville Daily Journal
Monday June 4, 1855

More outrages on the Canal - Canal Bank cut away and Aqueduct Burned by a Mob - Reward for Governor's Head, Lynching and threats of Lynching, &c. &c.

A short time since we published the fact that a large body of ruffians of Clay and Vigo counties had cut away the bank of the Birch Creek Reservoir, and that they threatened dire vengeance on those who should attempt to repair the breach. The Governor issued a proclamation, which we published, offering rewards for the perpetrators of the outrage. The scoundrels sent a formal notice to the resident Trustee at Terre Haute, that if an attempt were made to repair the Canal, it would be at the risk of the lives of the men sent, and that the canal would be cut away for a long distance in the neighborhood of the Reservoir. Notwithstanding these threats a state boat was sent to the Reservoir last Tuesday, with twenty armed laborers under charge of *Mr. Higgens*. They worked all Tuesday without interruption (We may here say we learned these particulars from Capt. Grant of the Archer [canal boat], who informed himself fully and carefully as possible of the facts.) On Tuesday night the boat was surrounded by men with blackened faces, who during the night kept up a continual firing of guns about the boat. These ruffians held a meeting about a mile from the boat during Tuesday night, and drew up a statement of their complaints and resolutions of a threatening nature. In the morning a copy of these was found stuck up on the boat, with a warning that the laborers would be allowed seven hours to take away the earth they had re-placed in the Reservoir bank, and one hour after that to leave, and that the canal would be cut away and the Birch Creek Aqueduct burned the following night. The laborers, who had been during the whole night expecting an attack, took the seven hours for at once making tracks from the neighborhood instead of undoing their work of the day previous.

Wednesday night the canal bank was cut away on Summit Level, eighteen miles below Terre Haute, and boats on the level coming down, at once made their way back to Terre Haute with much difficulty. The Aqueduct over Birch creek, near the Reservoir as was that part of the canal cut away, was burned down the same night a guard of the poor deluded scoundrels standing by to prevent interruption during the fire. It was also understood they intended to cut away the old (Splunge Creek) Reservoir, on the opposite side of the canal to the other, and perform other acts of villainy. As an exhibition of their contempt for the Governor and his Proclamation, they stuck up a notice offering a high reward for the Governor's head! It was reported at Terre Haute Friday morning that this mob had destroyed the two locks at the Junction. They left written notices at the doors of persons in their neighborhood who regarded their acts with disapproval, that if they gave any information as to the perpetrators of these cowardly acts, or had anything to say on the subject, they would be at once taken out and lynched. It was reported at Terre Haute, that the owner of a mill in the neighborhood had for some of his language of disapproval, been severely lynched by scourging, and was told then that if he interfered any further his mill and house would be burned to the ground.

We understand Gov. Wright was at Terre Haute last week, but returned to Indianapolis without visiting the reservoir neighborhood, being probably afraid to trust himself there. His action now is looked for with a great deal of interest. He has a duty to perform from which there must be no shrinking. Not only must this gang of lawless scoundrels be punished, but the repairs of reservoir, canal, &c must at once be made, and the improvements protected from further injury. He can get thousands of volunteers if necessary. Evansville alone, we have no doubt, would turn out enough men to render the Governor secure of his head in visiting the scene of these outrages.

Nothing but the lowest ignorance and depravity can account for the action of this mob. The Reservoir was in no manner the cause of sickness. It was filled with clear water, and was no more injurious than a natural lake. The Canal is of course a great benefit to the benighted region of country. We trust the ringleaders will be brought to punishment, and that right speedily. Even if the damages to reservoir and canal be promptly repaired, we doubt whether canal navigation at and below Summit Level can be worth much this summer.

The following boats were compelled to return to Terre Haute. They were all laden for Evansville.
Archer, Capt. Grant, loaded with oats and corn.
N. Rowley, - 3,609 bushels oats
Lorilla, - 1,800 bushels corn
L. Howes, - 1,700 bushels corn and 400 bbls. flour
Craftsman, - 1700 bushels corn,
Neptune, - 1,800 bushels corn
The Ben Bolt, loaded with Groceries from this city, is left high and dry on Summit Level.

Evansville Daily Journal
Monday June 4, 1855

A Public Calamity.

But few citizens are prepared to appreciate the great misfortune at the present time upon certain business interests of this city, of the recent outrages upon the works of the Wabash and Erie canal, by a lawless mob of beings. We had but just begun to learn and value the importance of this canal. Indeed, until very lately it has been almost valueless to us as a community. But the last two or three months, a steady stream of produce has been pouring into Evansville through this channel of trade, with a return tide of groceries and other articles required to supply the country from Evansville to Lafayette. - Warehouses and new firms have been started here to accommodate this business, and the Canal had certainly got to be looked upon as a new river of trade and commerce, and at last *reliable*. Our collector's books exhibit that last month the tolls collected here amounted to \$1,069. This month would have witnessed a very heavy increase. There is a large amount of produce now up the Canal awaiting shipment, and quantities of groceries, etc., here to go up. - But everything has been brought to a stand-still - the produce cannot be taken to market -- country merchants cannot get their stocks - contracts are broken - many boats are laid up and men thrown out of business - great interests affecting seriously whole communities are sacrificed - and all because a

few poor depraved and malicious ruffians imagine that a reservoir of pure water in a certain place does not conduce to the health of their neighborhood! And in their malice they have taken the very best plan to make that of real injury to the health of the country which before was only suspected of being so.

But we have not the space nor patience to speak further on this subject. We agree with our correspondent, that a meeting should be held on the subject of these outrages, and give the influence of this community toward assisting the Governor, physically if necessary, in any prompt and effectual action he may take in the premises.

Evansville Daily Journal
June 8, 1855

The Canal Meeting.

Last Wednesday evening a very large meeting of the citizens of Evansville was held at Apollo Hall, to take into consideration the recent outrages of the mob in Clay county, in breaking the reservoir and canal, burning the aqueduct, &c. Apollo Hall was crowded, and but one feeling seemed to pervade the mass, that of strong indignation against its course of those men, who taking the law into their own hands, and to remedy mere imaginary evils, have for a time by their lawless acts rendered almost useless that portion of the Wabash and Erie Canal below Terre Haute, and thus struck a heavy blow at the best interests of this and other communities, and thrown out of employment a large body of not two hundred men, thus sacrifices thousands of dollars of business, and as a very important time to trade and commerce too, throw hundreds of better men than themselves out of employment, and destroy the usefulness of a great public work, the full benefits of which we were but just beginning to realize! Still less grows the wonder when it is recollected how long and grievous a delay was experienced in getting this canal into practical operation.

But warmly as every man at the meeting seemed to feel, the whole proceedings were marked with dignity, but with a firm determination to see the law prevail, and the outrageous proceedings of the Clay county mob stopped at any sacrifice, and the criminals brought to punishment. Messrs. Rowley, (Canal Collector) Ingle and Carpenter, made strong speeches, the latter gentlemen dwelling particularly upon the effect abroad on the honor and credit of the State, if these riotous proceedings were not at once and promptly quailed. We should much have liked to give an abstract of these proceedings but our space is limited. It is enough to say, that they made those present feel this is not merely a subject in which this community, and communities along the Canal, have a warm interest, but the *whole State* is directly implicated so far as the preservation of its honor and credit is concerned.

We regret with others, the course of Mr. Coffin, of Parke county. He made a speech against the resolutions offered, and from the very apparent motive alone, on injuring the trustees of the Canal in public opinion here. This community has already spoken. Its free and candid opinions on those in authority, so far as the canal is concerned, when our people felt aggrieved by their

dilatory action in former times. But our citizens have no disposition now to listen to the repetition on either individual or general grievances, so far as the trustees are concerned. There was no such allusion made in the resolutions either to the bond-holders or trustees, in laudation of them, as to justify Mr. Coffin's exceedingly coarse charge of falsehood on the part of a certain statement of the resolutions. And at all events, the consideration of their action, good or bad, had nothing to do with the object of the meeting. We desire to treat a stranger with courtesy, especially a gentleman who has done good and laborious service in our State Legislature, yet we beg leave to say, that his remarks at this meeting, though well spoken, had much better have been omitted, both for the credit of the speaker and the harmony of feeling which pervaded the meeting. They were out of place, ill-timed, and the suggestions of motives and prejudices with which the meeting had nothing to do. No better evidence of this need be given, than the fact that the resolutions were passed without a single dissenting vote.

Our community now impatiently await the action of Gov. Wright. We are pledged to lend him any aid he may demand, to carry out strong and prompt action on his part as the executive officer of the State, in this affair. He has but got to make his desires known. We trust there will be no delay on his part. We assure him there will be none on the part of our citizens when the proper time comes.

Evansville Daily Journal
June 8, 1855

Canal Meeting.

At a called meeting of the citizens of Evansville, held at Apollo Hall Wednesday evening, June 6th, Mayor JOHN S. HOPKINS was called to the Chair, and A.H. Sanders and Rob't Robertson appointed Secretaries.

Mayor Hopkins, on taking the chair, briefly stated the object of the meeting was to take into consideration the recent outrages of a band of lawless men of Clay county, in cutting away the Birch Creek Reservoir and Canal adjoining, burning an aqueduct, &c. to the great injury of the business of the Canal and the interests of different communities, more especially perhaps of this. There were others present better posted than himself in the details of these outrages upon law and order.

Judge Battell offered the following resolutions, which he had prepared for the consideration of the meeting, and if deemed expressive of the feelings of the meeting, for its approval:

Resolved, That this meeting view with disapprobation, which they can hardly find words to express, the late riotous proceedings in Clay county, Indiana, in which such damage was done to the canal, that, if not repaired, will render useless any communication by means of it, between this city and Terre Haute.

It seems a mob, a short time since, masked and armed, banded together to let out the water in Birch Creek Reservoir - a reservoir necessary for the supply of water at certain periods to

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

the canal - and that when shortly after men employed by the Trustees in repairing it, the same bandits who had let out the water in the reservoir, armed and marked in like manner, drove them away, and subsequently destroyed Birch Creek Aqueduct. It cannot be expected in a resolution like this, intended briefly to express our views upon this matter, that it should point out all the evil consequences which will grow out of this lawless spirit, unless immediately and promptly put down. We deem it not improper, however, on the occasion to refer to a few. First, we notice its effect upon the prosperity of our city. Evansville has done much to procure the construction of this canal. She was not sparing of labor nor money in order to obtain a donation of land by Congress, by which the canal between this and Terre Haute was in part constructed; she was first to propose the meeting at Terre Haute between the citizens more directly interested and the agent of the Bond-holders of Indiana, at which the basis of the arrangement was made, and which was finally carried out by our Legislature by which, the Bond-holders under took its construction.

We need say nothing of the injury, which Evansville would sustain if the Canal is destroyed. The warehouses built with reference to it, would be useless - lots purchased on account of it, sink to nominal value - the commerce and trade which she already began largely to enjoy by means of it, will cease and be diverted to other channels. - But the consequences to the honor and prosperity of the State, are what most painfully impress us. **It is known that the bond-holders of Indiana, by contract with her, agreed to complete that part of the Canal, which at the time of the contract was unfinished, and then to take it in payment of one-half of her debt.** They have complied with their agreement - they have completed the Canal - they have released to the State one-half of their debt; but if the authorities of Indiana will not protect them in the enjoyment of it, they will have a valid claim upon her for the amount which they have paid for it, which probably, at this time, reaches seven millions of dollars, and thus a heavy debt is at once created, which our citizens will be compelled to pay by means of taxation. But this is not all the evil we shall sustain by our violation of State faith; no one will trust us hereafter; **who will loan to citizens of our State, on State, county, city or railroad bonds, after it is known that our government dare not enforce its own laws, and that here mobs rule when they please!**

It is melancholy to think, that this great work, the "Wabash and Erie Canal," of which we are so justly proud - it being greater in extent than any internal improvement of the kind in the United States, perhaps in the world; a work that has already greatly increased our prosperity and added to our wealth, and thereby lessening the burden of our taxes - may be rendered comparatively useless. Uniting as it does the Northern Lakes with the waters of the Mississippi, it will create an internal commerce which will not be equaled by any in this continent. It will ever be a powerful means to develop the resources of Indiana. Looking at the future, we scarcely can calculate the gold in showers it will scatter in our midst. We trust then it will never be said of this magnificent work, *it was destroyed by a few irresponsible desperadoes, which the Government of Indiana dared not, or was unable to put down.*

Therefore resolved, That His Excellency, Gov. Jos. A. Wright, be requested immediately to take measures to put down this mob - using every means that may be expedient, force if necessary; and we hereby pledge ourselves, if need be, with "our lives and fortunes."

Resolved, That the citizens of Indiana, especially those on the line of the Canal, be requested to hold meetings, and express their opinion upon this subject.

Resolved, That a Delegation of — citizens be appointed to wait upon His Excellency, Gov. Wright, and present him a copy of these proceedings, and request him to carry out our wishes as expressed in our resolutions, and further to confer with him on the subject as their wisdom may suggest.

Resolved, That a copy of these proceedings be published in each of the newspapers of this city.

Nathan Rowley, Esq., being called upon, stated he had visited Terre Haute for this purpose of ascertaining the extent of injuries committed by the mob, &c. He had been assured by Mr. Dowling, Trustee, that all the repairs might be made in two weeks if the laborers could be protected. He spoke of the immense importance this canal was just getting to be to Evansville, and gave a tabular statement of the amount of freight received and shipped by the canal during the month of May. The imports were over \$30,000 in value and the exports over \$100,000. The tolls collected at Evansville for the month amounted to \$1069. He approved of the resolution and thought instant action should be taken by the Governor in view of the course of these rioters. Only 180 men had then stopped the business of the whole canal, and greatly to the injury of this community. We could not and would not stand it as a community.

John Ingle, Esq., responded to a call in a very able speech, in which he reviewed the actions of the Clay county mob, the past history of Indiana as a law-abiding community, and the effects of this mob spirit if allowed to proceed unchecked, and especially of its effects upon the honor and standing of this State abroad. He urged the necessity of strong action upon the part of the Governor, and declared the willingness of this community to supply any deficiency of nerve on his part, and volunteer money and men if necessary.

Dr. Hatchett moved that this meeting resolve itself into a company, and report itself to the Governor as ready and willing to defend the Canal against all such outrageous proceedings as those of which we are now complaining.

Mr. Sanders offered as a substitute the following resolution, if accepted, to be placed among the regular resolutions, as offered by Judge Battell:

Resolved, That this meeting pledge the Governor, on behalf of the city of Evansville, a volunteer force of armed men, as many as may be desired by him, to assist his Excellency in restoring order in Clay county - for arresting and bringing to punishment these offenders against the law of the State, against

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

all order, and against the interests of various classes and communities, and the honor of Indiana - and for protecting any laborers who may be sent to repair the damages inflicted upon the works of the Canal, by a lawless mob of men.

The resolution was accepted by Dr. H. and by the meeting.

Mr. Coffin, of Parke county, opposed that part of the resolutions, which said the bond-holders had complied with their part of the contract, and the trustees had done their duty. It was false, and he could prove it. He bitterly complained of the trustees. He thought that a committee had better be appointed to visit the Reservoir, and inquire into the real complaints of the people there, than to send to the Governor - that the bond-holders and trustees were at the foundation of all the trouble.

Mr. J.S. Gavitt replied to one portion of Mr. C's remarks which was answered in turn by Mr. C.

Mr. Willard Carpenter addressed the meeting, and made a forcible speech in review of the building of the canal, showing donations of lands, &c., &c., and warmly recommended immediate action to stop the riotous proceedings on the part of certain citizens of Clay county.

Question being called upon the resolutions, they were put to vote and unanimously adopted.

Mr. J. W. Hughes moved that a committee of two be appointed in compliance with the resolution appoint delegates to visit the Governor, which motion was carried.

The Chairman appointed Hon. C. I. Battell and Hon. John Law said committee.

On motion, the meeting adjourned.

JOHN S. HOPKINS, Chairman

A. H. SANDERS

ROB'T ROBERTSON, Secretaries

Evansville Daily Journal
June 8, 1855

More Destruction!

The miserable wretches who have already occasioned so much trouble in Clay county, by their destruction of canal works, are still engaged in destroying, it appears. We make the following extracts from *Terre Haute* papers of the 5th:

RESERVOIR. - On Saturday night, between 11 and 12 o'clock, the Reservoir regulators visited the scene of their former villainy once more, and ordering a Mr. Mason and wife out of doors from a shanty which they occupied, set it on fire with eleven other similar buildings, the property of James Beard and Adolphus Erisman, and burned the whole village of workmen's shanties to the ground, with tools, barrows, &c., which they contained; the whole loss being about \$600.

[*Terre Haute Ex.*]

RESERVOIR DEPREDATIONS AGAIN. - We learn this morning that a band of the Reservoir Regulators burned all the buildings that the workmen occupied, together with their tools, wheelbarrows, etc., on Saturday night last. Eleven other building besides those occupied by the workmen, were burned to the ground. James Beard and Adolphus Erisman, are losers to some extent. This destroys, we believe, all the principal places of abode for the laborers on the Reservoir, and renders every efforts to repair the canal, dangerous and almost impossible, unless a military guard is stationed there.

What is to be done to check these depredations? Can't Joseph [Governor Wright] tell the people what to do? Workmen cannot be hired now, at any price to remain on the Reservoir. These outrages are becoming more alarming, and the desperadoes more daring. Can we stand and look upon these acts with indifference — acts that disgrace the county, and will also be a reproach upon our State, if they are permitted to triumph over justice.

[*Terre Haute Amer.*]

Evansville Daily Journal
9-24-1857

The Canal Cut at the Reservoir

From Mr. Igleheart, who returned from Worthington yesterday, we learn that the canal at Eel river has again been cut by a crowd of Clay county rascals, and the canal is entirely dry above Newberry. Mr. Igleheart states that the water had rushed out a deep gully ten or fifteen feet below the bottom of the canal and that it will take at least two weeks to repair it. It is supposed that the same parties who were guilty of the outrages at the reservoir in 1855, have made the present break. The news created considerable excitement upon the streets yesterday. Those who remember the repeated outrages of this character, committed by the "Clay County Boys" in the summer of '55, know the indignation they excited. The canal will be repaired as soon as possible, but its safety cannot be insured for a day while the perpetrators of these high handed outrages are still at large.

Evansville Daily Journal
11-14-1859

The Canal Managers have issued handbills offering \$100 reward for the detection of any one in cutting the banks of the canal. Several instances have come under their observation, in which the water has been let out of the canal, and they think the perpetrators of these outrages are not fully aware of the penalty that attaches to the commission of this crime. We publish below the statute on this point:

SEC. 74. Every person who shall willfully and maliciously injure or destroy any lock, culvert, or embankment of said canal, or shall willfully or maliciously make any aperture or breach in any embankment of said canal, with intent to injure or destroy the same, shall, on conviction, be punished by imprisonment in the State prison, at hard labor, not more than five years, or by fine not exceeding five hundred dollars, and imprisonment in the county jail not more than two years; and

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

shall be moreover liable to said Trustees for the damages occasioned thereby, which damages, when recovered, shall be considered as a part of the revenues of said canal, and applied accordingly. And the Trustees for the time being may prosecute and sue accordingly, and no plea or other technical objection, in her abatement, shall be taken or judiciously allowed, so as to defeat such prosecution or action, or other proceeding, on the ground of any misnomer, mis-description of the premises or parties, or want of interest in the prosecutor or plaintiff, as the case may be.

The Clay County Regulators came out in force destroying canal structures including burning the Feeder Dam to the water's edge. In July 1854, 200 people attended a meeting about Birch Creek Reservoir fearing that rotting timber in the water was responsible for spreading disease. A compromise was reached to cut all the timber in the reservoir, which was done at a cost of \$10,000 and one life. This did not appease the Regulators, who continued destroying canal structures until the works were abandoned in 1860-61. Birch Creek

Reservoir was cut in June 1854, May 1855, June 1855, and March 1860. All five of the reservoirs on the Wabash & Erie Canal at one time or another had their banks cut and drained by local "committees of safety."

In the following chapters we will explore the Cross-Cut in the order it was constructed through Vigo, Clay and Greene counties in Indiana. We will discover the part it played in each county's history. This will be followed by a chapter of newspaper articles from the canal era that show what was happening on the canal and public sentiment at that time.

Today there is only a little evidence of the Cross-Cut Canal with a few lock remains; an iron bridge, an old foundation, a well, and a few old stones and timbers at the site of the feeder dam; the dams of both reservoirs; and some prism remnants along its route. The cut stone lock at Riley is going to be restored and a park built around it.

KEYS DATES FOR THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

	1836-39	Work on Eel River Dam & Feeder Work on Summit Locks 46 & 47
	1838	Birch Creek Aqueduct Built
Jul	1838	Anguilla (Eel) Platted at Eel River Feeder Dam
	1839	Work Ceased on the Cross-Cut
May 24	1848	Contracts Bid for 2nd Cross-Cut
Nov 15	1848	Contracts Bid - Pt. Commerce (Worthington) to Newberry
	1849	Splunge Creek Reservoir Built
Spr	1850	Eel River Feeder Dam Rebuilt
May	1850	Cross-Cut Watered from Summit to Terre Haute "Oleus" Reaches Bowling Green
Spr	1851	First Boat Crosses Cross-Cut Terre Haute to Worthington
Mar 4	1853	General Assembly Requests Reservoir Study
	1853	Birch Creek Reservoir Completed
Jun 22	1854	Clay County Regulators Breach Birch Creek Reservoir
Sep 9	1854	Eel River Feeder Dam Damaged —Arson
Fall	1854	Timber Removed from Birch Creek Reservoir
May 10	1855	Birch Creek Reservoir Cut by 100 Men —Daylight
	1855	Splunge Creek Reservoir Drained by Terrorists
May 24	1855	Governor Wright Calls Out Militia from Evansville
	1857	Regulators Strike Again
Mar	1859	Chauncy Rose of Terre Haute Leases Cross-Cut Canal
Fall	1860	Eel River to Newberry Abandoned
Nov/Dec	1866	Splunge Creek Reservoir Final Breach

VIGO COUNTY CANAL STRUCTURES

NO. 11 of 19 Counties

WABASH & ERIE CANAL BY INDIANA COUNTY

Apr 25, 2008

VIGO COUNTY

ESTABLISHED : Feb. 15, 1818
 NAMED FOR: Francis Vigo - merchant aided George R Clark
 Bell in Vigo court house paid from his estate
 SIZE : 403 Sq. miles
 CANAL TOWNS : Terre Haute
 Riley (Lockport)

COUNTY SEAT - TERRE HAUTE

ESTABLISHED : 1816
 FOUNDERS : C. Bullitt, T. Bullitt, J. Lindley,
 Gen Lasselle, Major Markle
 NAMED FOR : High Ground above prairie to west & east
 NICKNAME :
 W&E reached here Oct 1849

TERRE HAUTE
 POPULATION
 1830
 1840
 1860
 1870
 Est. 2006

SUMMARY OF STRUCTURES IN VIGO COUNTY

LENGTH OF CANAL IN COUNTY

28 = MILES

LIFT QTY NUMBERS

17.0 2 No. 46 & 47
 62.2 7 NO. 41-45, 48 & 49
79.2 9

Guard Locks
 Other Locks
 Aqueduct - Open 2 NO. 13 & 14
 Aqueduct - Covered
 Stone Arches 1 No. 151
 Timber Arches 1 No. 145
 Box Culverts 10 NO. 146-150, & 152-156

Feeders to main Canal
 Slackwater Crossings
 Dams
 Road Bridges 25 No. 87-111
 Waste Weir 2
 Flood Gates

Stone Locks
 Timber Locks
 County Totals

TOWNS

Terre Haute
 Riley

CANAL TOWNSHIPS

Otter Creek
 Harrison
 Honey Creek
 Riley
 Pierson

WATERWAYS

Spring Creek, Otter Creek
 Lost Creek
 Little Honey Creek
 Honey Creek

VIGO COUNTY

ESTABLISHED : Feb. 15, 1818
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TERRE HAUTE
 POPULATION
 1830
 1840
 1860
 1870
 Est. 2006

SUMMARY OF STRUCTURES IN VIGO COUNTY

	<u>LIFT</u>	<u>QTY</u>	<u>NUMBERS</u>	<u>LENGTH OF CANAL IN COUNTY</u>
Stone Locks	17.0	2	No. 46 & 47	<u>28 = MILES</u>
Timber Locks	62.2	7	No. 41-45, 48 & 49	
County Totals	<u>79.2</u>	<u>9</u>		
Guard Locks				
Other Locks				
Aqueduct - Open		2	No. 13 & 14	
Aqueduct - Covered				
Stone Arches		1	No. 151	
Timber Arches		1	No. 145	
Box Culverts		10	No. 146-150, & 152-156	
Feeders to main Canal				
Slackwater Crossings				
Dams				
Road Bridges		25	No. 87-111	
Waste Weir		2		
Flood Gates				

CANAL TOWNSHIPS

Otter Creek
 Harrison
 Honey Creek
 Riley
 Pierson

TOWNS

Terre Haute
 Riley

WATERWAYS

Spring Creek, Otter Creek
 Lost Creek
 Little Honey Creek
 Honey Creek

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

Apr 25, 2008

DETAILS OF WABASH & ERIE CANAL IN VIGO COUNTY

Official distances in bold

MILEAGE
FROM IN
ST LINE County

1 Chain = 66 Feet
SPANS / DIMENSIONS

TYPE

1847 REPORT & MISC DETAILS

ROAD LOCATIONS

GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS

X = Visible Remains or Marker
 L = Locations

Parke County Line
 L-1 Spring Creek
 L-2 Otter Creek
 L-3 Lost Creek

above Otter Crk
 just below Otter Crk
 At Sasseen's
 1/4 mile above Ft Harrison
 Round Pond
 Upper End of Terre Haute Bluff
 At foot of basin in Terre Haute
 Nadir Level - water from both directions
 First St - Terre Haute
 Second St at Foot of locks

Culvert No. 145
 Road Bridge No.87
Aqueduct No. 13
 Road Bridge No.88
 Culvert No. 146
 Road Bridge No.89
 Road Bridge No.90
 Culvert No. 147
 Road Bridge No.91
 Tow Path Bridge
 Culvert under towpath to Wabash tumble
 Road Bridge No.92
 Road Bridge No.93
Lock No. 41
Lock No. 42
 Road Bridge No.94
 Road Bridge No.95
 Road Bridge No.96
 Road Bridge No.97
 Road Bridge No.98
 Road Bridge No.99
 Road Bridge No.100
 Road Bridge No.101
 Road Bridge No.102
 Culvert No. 148
 Road Bridge No.103
 Road Bridge No.104
 Road Bridge No.105
 Road Bridge No.106
 Waste Weir in berm bank
 Culvert No. 149
Lock No. 43
 Road Bridge No.107
Lock No. 44
 Culvert No. 150
 Culvert No. 151
 Culvert No. 152
 Road Bridge No.108
Lock No. 45
 Culvert No. 153
 Road Bridge No.109

Market St.
 Lafayette Rd.
 Fourth St.
 Fifth St.
 Sixth St.
 Seventh St
 Chestnut St
 National Rd.
 Bloomington Rd.
 Old channel of Lost Creek
 At Dean's
 Louisville Rd
 Half mile below Louisville Rd
 At Ishmael Pugh's
 Church's
 Church's Run
 4 miles south of Terre Haute
 Just below Lock 43

Arch - Timber
Open-Trunk 4 x 40 Ft
 Timber - Box 3 spans
 Timber - Box 1 span
Wood - Crib 19.2 ft Lift
Wood - Crib together
 Double track
 Double track
 10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
 Timber - Box 1 span
Wood - Crib 8.5 Ft Lift
Wood - Crib 8.5 Ft Lift
 Timber - Box 1 span
 Arch - Stone
 Timber - Box 1 span
Wood - Crib 9 Ft Lift
 Timber - Box 1 span

24 Ft Chord
 160 Ft
 10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
 10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
 40 ft long
 Double track
 Double track
 10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
 10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
 10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
 15 Ft chord
 14 Ft x 2.75 Ft
 10 Ft x 1.5 Ft

215 0

226.0 11

X L-7 Little Honey Creek remains removed 2007

Louisville Road

Official distances in bold

DETAILS OF WABASH & ERIE CANAL IN VIGO COUNTY

Apr 25, 2008

<u>MILEAGE</u>		X = Visible Remains or Marker	<u>DETAILS OF WABASH & ERIE CANAL IN VIGO COUNTY</u>			1 Chain = 66 Feet		
<u>FROM</u>	<u>IN</u>	L = Locations	<u>GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS</u>	<u>ROAD LOCATIONS</u>	<u>1847 REPORT & MISC DETAILS</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>SPANS / DIMENSIONS</u>	
215	0		Parke County Line					
		L-1	Spring Creek		Culvert No. 145	Arch - Timber		24 Ft Chord
			above Otter Crk		Road Bridge No.87			
		L-2	Otter Creek		Aqueduct No. 13	Open-Trunk	4 x 40 Ft	160 Ft
			just below Otter Crk		Road Bridge No.88			
		X L-3	Lost Creek		Culvert No. 146	Timber - Box	3 spans	10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
			At Sasseen's		Road Bridge No.89			
			1/4 mile above Ft Harrison		Road Bridge No.90			
			Round Pond		Culvert No. 147	Timber - Box	1 span	10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
			Upper End of Terre Haute Bluff		Road Bridge No.91			
			At foot of basin in Terre Haute		Tow Path Bridge			
		L-4	Nadir Level - water from both directions		Culvert under towpath to Wabash tumble			40 ft long
226.0	11		First St - Terre Haute		Road Bridge No.92			Double track
			Second St at Foot of locks		Road Bridge No.93			
		L-5			Lock No. 41	1 gate shared	Wood - Crib	19.2 ft Lift
					Lock No. 42	" "	Wood - Crib	together
			Market St.		Road Bridge No.94			
			Lafayette Rd.		Road Bridge No.95	pivot		
			Fourth St.		Road Bridge No.96			
			Fifth St.		Road Bridge No.97	pivot		
			Sixth St.		Road Bridge No.98			
			Seventh St		Road Bridge No.99	County Road north of Praire House		
			Chestnut St		Road Bridge No.100			Double track
		L-6	National Rd.		Road Bridge No.101			Double track
			Bloomington Rd.		Road Bridge No.102	& Towpath		
			Old channel of Lost Creek		Culvert No. 148	Timber - Box	1 span	10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
			At Dean's		Road Bridge No.103			
			Louisville Rd		Road Bridge No.104			
			Half mile below Louisville Rd		Road Bridge No.105			
			At Ishmael Pugh's		Road Bridge No.106			
			Church's		Waste Weir in berm bank			
			Church's Run		Culvert No. 149	Timber - Box	2 spans	10 Ft x 2 Ft
			4 miles south of Terre Haute		Lock No. 43	Wood - Crib	8.5 Ft Lift	
					Road Bridge No.107			10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
			Just below Lock 43		Lock No. 44	Wood - Crib	8.5 Ft Lift	
					Culvert No. 150	Timber - Box	1 span	10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
		X L-7	Little Honey Creek	remains removed 2007	Culvert No. 151	Arch - Stone		15 Ft chord
					Culvert No. 152	Timber - Box	1 span	14 Ft x 2.75 Ft
					Road Bridge No.108			
					Lock No. 45	Wood - Crib	9 Ft Lift	
					Culvert No. 153	Timber - Box	1 span	10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
			Louisville Road		Road Bridge No.109			

Apr 25, 2008

1 Chain = 66 Feet
/ DIMENSIONS

DETAILS OF WABASH & ERIE CANAL IN VIGO COUNTY

Official distances in bold
MILEAGE FROM IN ST LINE County
X = Visible Remains or Marker
L = Locations

GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS	ROAD LOCATIONS	1847 REPORT & MISC DETAILS	TYPE	DIMENSIONS
L-8 Honey Creek		Lock No. 46	Cut Stone	8.5 Ft Lift
X L-9 "Best Lock in Indiana" by Robert Logan- Pike Co.		Aqueduct No. 14	Open-Trunk	3 spans
		Lock No. 47	Cut Stone	8.5 Ft Lift
		Culvert No. 154	Timber - Box	1 span
X L-10 Riley "Lockport"		Lock No. 48	Wood - Crib	8 Ft Lift
		Road Bridge No. 110		
X L-11 North end of Eel River Summit		Lock No. 49	Wood - Crib	9 Ft Lift
	Short distance above Lock 49	Culvert No. 155	Timber - Box	1 span
	Half mile above Lock 49	Towpath Bridge		
L-12 Across Deepcut		Road Bridge No. 111		
	South end of Eel River Summit level	Culvert No. 156	Timber - Box	1 span
	Clay County Line			



KEY DATES FOR WABASH & ERIE CANAL

MAR 2	1827	FEDERAL LAND GRANT - CANAL
FEB 22	1832	GROUND BREAKING - FT WAYNE
JAN 27	1836	NOAH NOBLE SIGNS MAMMOTH IMPRV
JUL 4	1843	GRAND OPENING CELEBRATION
JUL 31	1847	TRANSFER FROM STATE TO TRUSTEES
OCT 25	1849	FIRST BOAT REACHES TERRE HAUTE
SEP 22	1853	"PENNSYLVANIA" REACHES EVANSVILLE
	1874	TRUSTEE SURRENDER CANAL
FEB 12	1876	CANAL SOLD TO BIDDERS

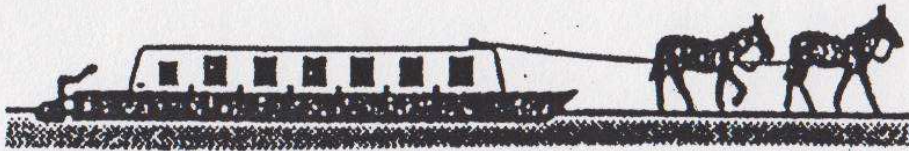
Official distances in bold

DETAILS OF WABASH & ERIE CANAL IN VIGO COUNTY

Apr 25, 2008

<u>MILEAGE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>IN</u>	<u>ST LINE</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS</u>	<u>ROAD LOCATIONS</u>	<u>1847 REPORT & MISC DETAILS</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>/ DIMENSIONS</u>
					L-8		Lock No. 46	Cut Stone	8.5 Ft Lift
					L-8	Honey Creek	Aqueduct No. 14	Open-Trunk	3 spans 94 Ft
				X	L-9	"Best Lock In Indiana" by Robert Logan- Pike Co.	Lock No. 47	Cut Stone	8.5 Ft Lift
							Culvert No. 154	Timber - Box	1 span 10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
				X	L-10	Riley "Lockport"	Lock No. 48	Wood - Crib	8 Ft Lift
238	23			X	L-11	North end of Eel River Summit	Road Bridge No.110	Wood - Crib	9 Ft Lift
						Short distance above Lock 49	Culvert No. 155	Timber - Box	1 span 12 Ft x 2 Ft
						Half mile above Lock 49	Towpath Bridge		
					L-12	Across Deepcut	Road Bridge No.111 "Blue Hole"		
						South end of Eel River Summit level	Culvert No. 156	Timber - Box	1 span 12.5 Ft x 2 Ft
243	28					Clay County Line			

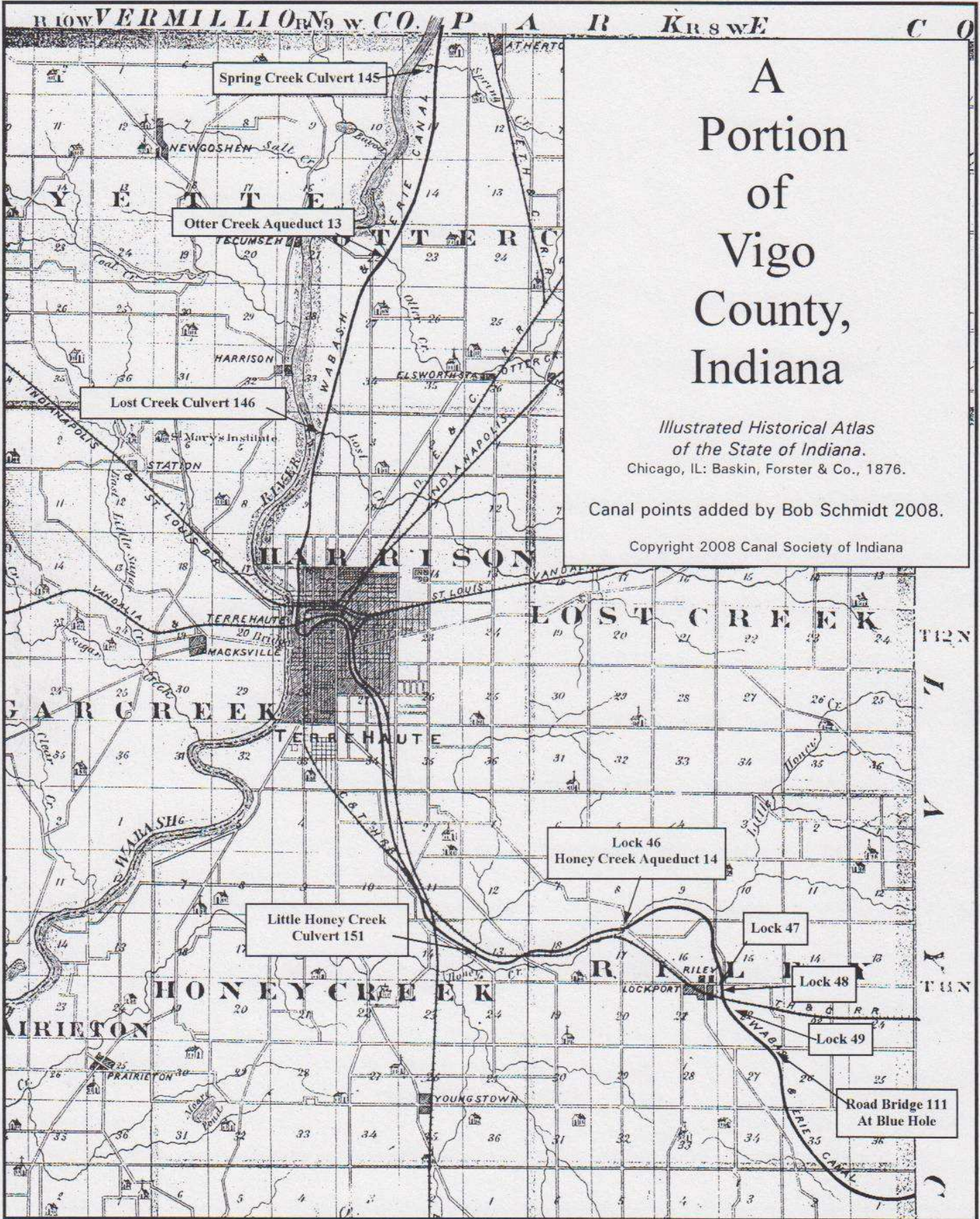
1 Chain = 66 Feet



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ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL



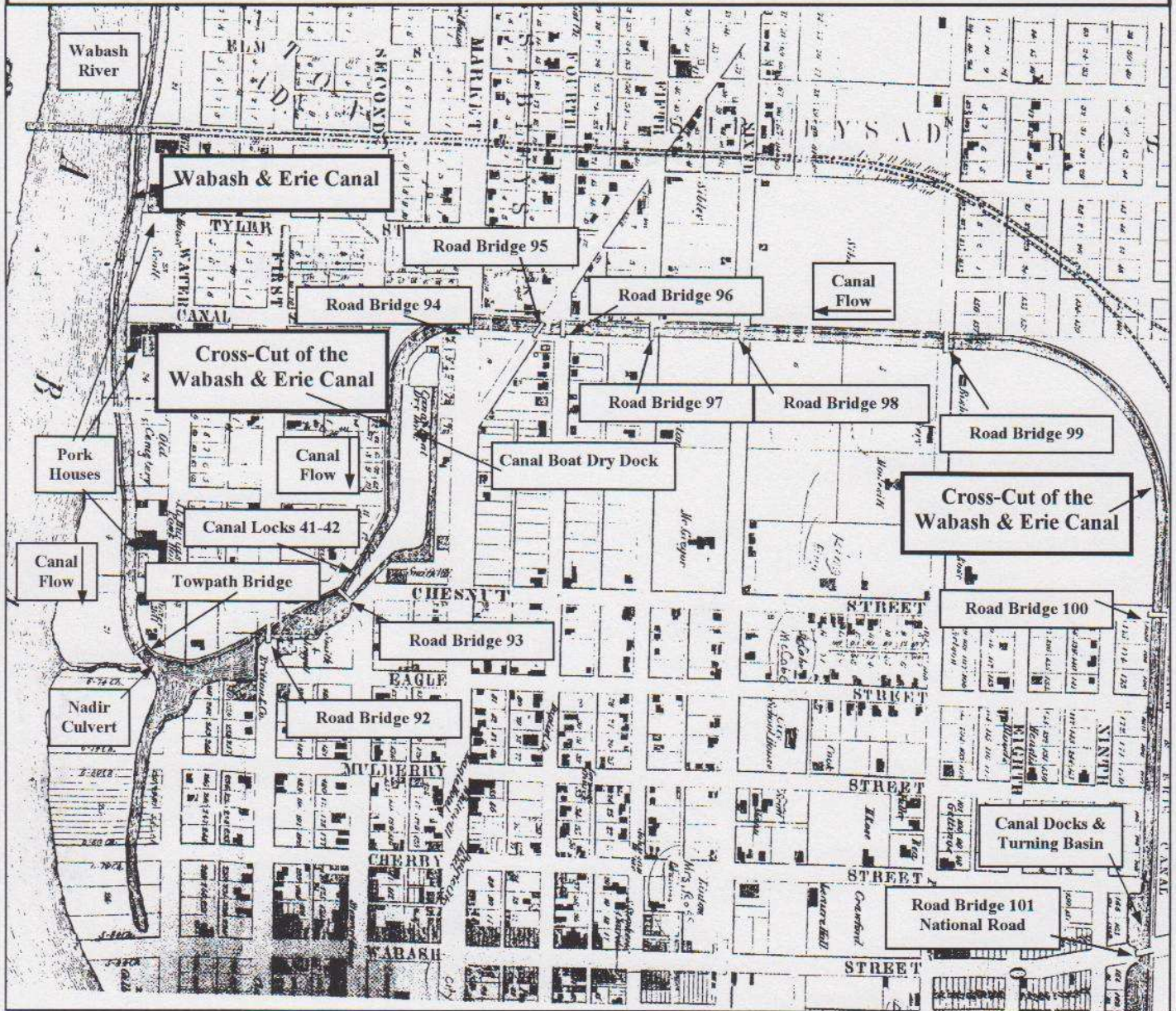
A Portion of Vigo County, Indiana

*Illustrated Historical Atlas
of the State of Indiana.*
Chicago, IL: Baskin, Forster & Co., 1876.

Canal points added by Bob Schmidt 2008.

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ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL



The Wabash and Erie Canal and the Cross-Cut Canal Through a Portion of Terre Haute, Indiana in 1854

With Canal Features Added in 2008 by Bob Schmidt
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As the Wabash & Erie Canal came into Terre Haute from the north it approached and followed the Wabash River. Pork houses were located along it. The canal itself never entered the river at this point. The Cross-Cut Canal waters were coming off the summit at Blue Hole and converged with the waters coming from the north in Parke county. When they met at the nadir level (lowest point) a culvert provided excess canal waters an outlet into the Wabash River. A large basin was located at this level. At the basin a towpath bridge was built for the towing animals to cross when the towpath changed to the opposite side of the canal. At the northern end of the basin was a canal boat dry dock and two locks. Locks 41 and 42 shared a common center gate. Many road bridges were needed in this town since the canal wound through it rather than along its side. Note the flow of the water coming off the summits to the nadir level.

VIGO COUNTY

Vigo County was initially a part of Knox County of The Indiana Territory. Fort Harrison a 150-foot square stockade on the Wabash river had been built in 1811 by Governor William Henry Harrison enroute to confront the "The Prophet," a Shawnee Indian chief, on the Tippecanoe River. The community that grew up around this fort would later be known as Old Terre Haute.

The site was well known to the early Jesuit missionaries and French traders. It had been the home of a band of Wea Indians. Tradition has it that a savage battle was fought here between invading Iroquois and the Illinois Indians. The Iroquois suffered their worst defeat here than in any other of their battles in the Midlands.

Terre Haute was a point on what was a dividing line between Louisiana and Canada, the French colonial provinces, from 1720-1763 when the occupation by the French ended. But more was in store for the land than just a point on a map.

In December 1816, the Indiana State Legislature organized Sullivan County cutting it out of Knox County. Thus Old Terre Haute was for a time in Sullivan County.

TERRE HAUTE

In 1816 a group of southern Indiana and Kentucky businessmen composed of Jonathan Lindley, Abraham Markle, Hyacinth Lasselle and Cuthbert and Thomas Bullitt formed the Terre Haute Town Company. They hired William Hoggatt, an engineer/surveyor, to choose the spot for a new village to be called Terre Haute. He chose a site three miles south of the fort and said, "If a town is started on this location, it will some day become a flourishing city." The site was located where the river ran straight and the land was high.

In September 1816, The Terre Haute Company purchased 30,000 acres south of the fort from Joseph Kitchell, a land speculator from Jackson County. Joseph Kitchell, a lawyer, filed the plat on October 25, 1816. It was bordered on the west by the Wabash River for 8 blocks and extended five blocks to the east with the public square located at its center. The town was laid out by William Hoggatt and his assistant was James Boord. The village consisted of 877.64 acres on which they laid off parallel streets directly north and south from the river creating 268 in-lots. Outlot No. 3 was donated for a "burying ground," the lot at Fourth and Poplar streets was marked the "Church Lot" and several lots were set aside as "Seminary Lots." Third street was to be the market street and was made wider and extended north to the wagon road to Lafayette and south to the

road to Vincennes. This road extending from Lafayette to Vincennes became known as the Old State Road. At first there was no east-west road. One eventually was opened to Indianapolis once it was laid out in 1821 and later the National Road passed through the town.

By October 25, 1816, twenty-two people had purchased lots. Although at first land sales of the newly platted village were brisk, some purchasers defaulted on their loans and lots remained unsold. The first year only two cabins were built. Apparently potential buyers favored the more developed area around the fort.

On March 21, 1818, the legislature officially organized Vigo County carving it out of Sullivan County. It was named in honor of Col. Francis Vigo, who was of Italian heritage but a citizen of Spain, and who had previously assisted George Rogers Clark in financing Clark's exploration and Revolutionary War efforts, served as his agent to obtain military information about the British campaigns on what was then the frontier, and played an important part in the capture of Fort Vincennes. The new Vigo County encompassed an area of 410 square miles with 7 of the square miles covered by water.

Two months after Vigo County was organized, the village of Terre Haute was awarded the county seat. Its proprietors had donated 80 lots, \$4,000 and had made provision for a courthouse square. This greatly improved the prospects of the village's growth. It gained prestige. Soon afterward the courthouse was built followed by a jail. A post office was established and it had a ferry across the Wabash River.

Terre Haute became the destination for new settlers. They included Dr. Charles B. Modesitt, a physician who established a ferry across the Wabash river; Henry Redford, who built the celebrated Eagle and Lion; Curtin Gilbert, who erected a two-story frame house in which the upper part was occupied by the County court and the lower part the Post Office and who was Vigo County's first clerk, auditor and recorder; Judge Demas Deming, an Associate judge who helped organize the Terre Haute Board of the State Bank; and Chauncey Rose, who built a grist mill near present day Roseville, opened a country store, built the Prairie House in 1838, pushed for the Richmond and Indianapolis Railroad, endowed the Rose Ladies Aid Society, gave eighty thousand dollars to Wabash College, endowed what is now the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, provided for a library for what is now Indiana State University, endowed the Vigo County Providence Hospital, the Rose Orphan Home and the Rose Dispensary.

Stores

The first store was fitted out by Lucius H. Scott,

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

an agent for Messrs. Wasson & Sayers of Vincennes, in a room of Dr. Modesitt in November, 1817, but its goods were delayed by the river freezing over. It did not open until January, 1818 and closed that May. Four to five months later John Earle set up a store in a story and a half house on the corner of Water and Poplar streets. His home was in the frame part of the building and his store in the log portion of it. Other early merchants included Isaac C. Elson, George Hussey, the Linton brothers, William C. and David, and John F. and William S. Cruft.

Wabash River

The Wabash River provided transportation for the village's farm produce and passengers. In the early years the keel boat or barge was propelled by either oars or "setting poles," which could pole the boat up stream and also ward off logs. Some of them were adapted for transporting wood or common freight while others were fitted for passenger travel. Logs were floated to saw mills by fastening them together side by side into a raft. Sometimes farm products were loaded onto these rafts and taken all the way to New Orleans, a trip that was made in about twenty-one days.

Skiffs shaped like canoes were rowed and had paddles in their gunwales. And flat bottomed ferry boats fitted with high rails carried cattle, sheep, hogs and laded wagons across the river from a wide bridge or apron located on either side of the river. They too were propelled by poles.

In 1823 the steamboat "Florence" came to Terre Haute and changed river transportation. In 1826 another steamboat arrived. Before long there was a "fleet of steamboats" loading and unloading sugar, salt and other merchandise on a published schedule. Due to numerous sandbars and low water during the summer months steamboats often could not go further up the Wabash than Terre Haute. This made it a strategic location as a river terminal.

Pork Processing

Terre Haute's first industry was processing the droves of corn-fattened hogs raised in the area. Before long slaughterhouses lined the river. Hogs were butchered and their meat salted or smoked. Their hides were tanned or sold raw.

Some of Terre Haute's first products were hominy and whisky. Mills ground the wheat and corn that were grown.

Mail Service

The *Terre Haute Register* in December 1826 reported, "Terre Haute has advanced to the dignity of a weekly mail." Actually by 1825 mail stages were running three times a week to Cincinnati via Indianapolis; three times a week to Louisville and Evansville; twice a week to Lafayette; and once a week to Springfield, IL. By 1841 mail arrived either by stage or horse-back daily from the east, three times a week from the west and three times a week from the south.

Justice

The early justice system was composed of prominent citizens who were honored by being given seats on the bench. They were not lawyers and were known as Associate Judges. The first circuit court was held in April 1818. Thomas H. Blake, President judge of the first Judicial circuit, presided.

Blake was a lawyer whose commission was signed by the first governor of Indiana, Jonathan Jennings. Another early lawyer was Nathaniel P. Huntington.

Pioneer lawyers rode a circuit. They had to provide their own horses that could carry them over muddy roads and swollen streams, possess saddle bags to carry their papers and clothing, and own an overcoat or blanket and green leggings.

Incorporation

Approximately 1,000 residents of the village voted to incorporate Terre Haute as a town in 1832. Its new officials had the trees and underbrush cleared around the courthouse, the streets graded, built cisterns and a new jail and began inspecting the packing houses. More than 100 businesses, churches and schools were built around the public square by the mid-1840s.

National Road

The National Road was built east from Cumberland, MD through Terre Haute in 1835. Soon stage coaches and wagon trains brought in more settlers.

Wabash & Erie Canal

The proposed western terminus for the Wabash & Erie Canal was at the confluence of the Tippecanoe and Wabash rivers at Lafayette. Vigo County leading internal improvement advocates, Thomas H. Blake and Senator William C. Linton, fought to have the canal extended to Terre Haute. In January 1836 the state made a \$1.4 million dollar appropriation to do that, but Blake

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

was still not satisfied. In May of the same year he led the cry to approve building of the proposed Cross-Cut Canal to connect the Wabash & Erie at Terre Haute to the Central Canal at Indianapolis. Construction started the next year. Lock 47, one of the finest stone locks ever built in Indiana was designed and built by Robert Logan, a Scottish immigrant from Pike county, near Riley in 1938.

The Financial Panic of 1837 caused by mismanagement of an over zealous internal improvement plan, which included not only canals, but roads, railroads and river projects, slowed progress. The state's debt and bank failures led to the issuance of bonds to continue construction of the Wabash & Erie Canal. To finance construction to Terre Haute, the state issued non-interest-bearing canal scrip in 1842 that was known as "Blue Dog."

New York attorney, act on their claims.

In May 1845 at a canal convention held in Terre Haute, Butler and others urged Blake to help them. Blake who was the Commissioner of the U. S. Land Office in Washington, D. C. at the time, gave up his job to return to Terre Haute and become a resident trustee when a settlement was negotiated that required then Governor James Whitcomb to transfer all canal lands to trustees. Gov. Whitcomb transferred these lands of July 31, 1847.

In January, 1846, an elaborate bill for the completion of the canal was passed by both houses of the Indiana legislature. Everyone, including the editor of the *Express*, had high expectations that the canal would be completed early. In his February 4, 1846 issue he wrote:

"Terre Haute will shortly present attractions to the enterprising immigrant which will not be found in many of the western states. Situated as it is on the Wabash river, at the crossing of the National Road, and on the great canal that is to connect the northern lakes with the Ohio river, and where an immense water-power may be used for manufacturing purposes, together with the finest agricultural country all around it, and an enterprising and energetic population daily coming into the country, these things must make this a point which will be sought after by those who wish to make a profitable investment of their money, or seek a residence where they may even sit still and see their outlays increase. Real estate and rents will go up, while we hope to see a corresponding increase of business in every department of the mechanic arts, as well as the products of the soil. This is the best time that may ever be offered for the purchase of property in Vigo county; for when operations are commenced on the canal, — which is anticipated by July, — it will not be difficult for sellers to find purchasers for any property they may now have in market. The city of Indiana (Lafayette) as now boasted by some, will have moved some seventy miles south; the smoke of our manufacturing establishments will be seen darkening the heavens; the busy water-wheel will ply its ceaseless rounds; the shrill scream of the steamboat on the Wabash will be heard; the daily arrival of the canal-boat, freighted from New York or Ohio, will be seen; while the 'Express' office may throw off a daily sheet, with the latest news from the four quarters of the globe. When we shall have a bridge over the Wabash, metal on the National Road, through to St. Louis, with daily stages arriving and departing; a canal and an improved river, by which produce may go south; a canal opening to the lakes, and to the city of New York, with possibly a railroad ending here from the west; we ask, what shall keep pace with this country? What town on the Wabash shall call ours a village? Are these vain speculations? We already have a fair prospect for a canal. The friends of the National Road in congress are urging appropriations for its completion; our citizens are daily taking stock in the Wabash bridge, and surely we may base a reasonable expectation on all of these things. We do not often indulge in the visionary, and in soberness and truth we think much of what we have alluded to will be upon us in a few short years; and all may be realized about the next



These examples of canal scrip are at the Vigo County Library.

Even though the canal was completed to Lafayette in 1843 and the "Albert S. White," a line boat, arrived in Toledo on May 8 after completing the first 175-mile trip between the two points resulting in a major Fourth of July celebration in Fort Wayne, the London bond holders were unhappy. They had Charles Butler, a

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

Whig presidency.”

Canal Headquarters

Between 1847 and 1876 Terre Haute was the headquarters for the Wabash & Erie Canal. Prior to that time it was owned by the state. When the ownership of the canal was transferred from the state to private ownership (the bond holders) they set up headquarters at Terre Haute since it was near where construction was taking place.

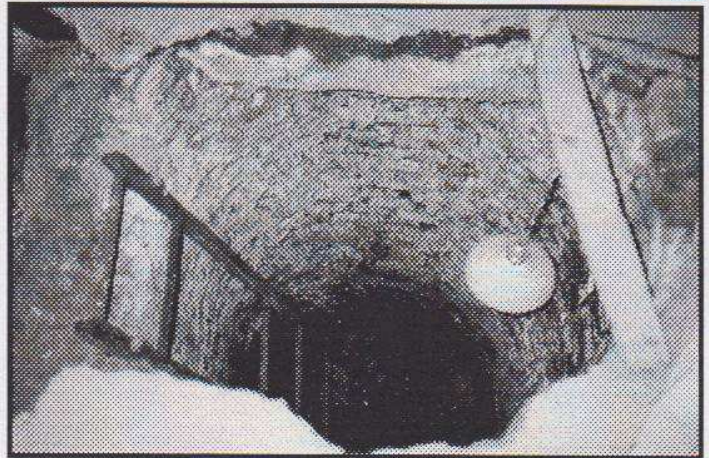
Contracts were let to canal builders in half-mile sections. Samuel Dodson, who afterward became the city marshal, held the contract for the summit near Lockport (Riley), ten miles southeast of Terre Haute. K. B. Osborn was the superintendent and William J. Ball was the resident engineer.

The Wabash & Erie Canal reached Terre Haute in 1849 and gave the town its lowest-cost and most direct link to the Atlantic seaboard via the Great Lakes and New York's Erie Canal. Its basin where canal boats could dock and turn around was located at 9½ St. and Wabash Avenue. A mere 20 days after it opened goods were shipped from New York to John D. Early by lake and the canal. Freight charges were \$1.45 per 100 pounds.

Originally the Wabash & Erie was to run into the Wabash River at Ohio Street. However, when the Wabash was found not to be navigable enough to justify making it a canal terminus, its route was changed to the Cross-Cut Canal. To do this the canal followed a circuitous route through the town requiring numerous road bridges. Small wooden bridges with short spans were built high enough above the towpath to allow the passage of the towing animals beneath them on the following streets: Water, First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Chestnut, Main and Poplar. The Lafayette avenue bridge was built with a short revolving draw span. In a space extending between Canal and Chestnut streets and Second and Market (Third) streets a shipyard, lock and dry-dock were built in which to repair and store canal boats. An 109 feet long and 16 feet wide lock raised/lowered canal boats about 10 feet near the junction of Second and Chestnut.

Prior to 1837 a large residence was built on the corner of 9th and Poplar in Terre Haute and operated the earliest production brewery in the area. As business grew the size of the original 4,000 ft. structure was increased to 10,000 square feet in 1858. In 1862 it was sold to 25-year-old Ernest Bleemel, who operated the brewery until 1874. It then was home to E. Bleemel Flour and Feed.

Several deep brick coolers were built in the northeast corner of the building to temporarily store the beer. This was adjacent to the canal dock system of the Cross-Cut Canal along 9th ½ Street, also known as Canal Street. Due to the use of railroads and lack of funds during the Civil War, the canal and coolers were filled in. This was approximately done in 1865. During the mid-1990s, its owner Mike Rowe, excavated one of the coolers and portions of the tunnels connecting the brewery to other buildings across the street.



Top: This photo shows the old residence and brewery. The Cross-Cut Canal ran behind the portion of the building on the far right. Bottom: This is one of the brick coolers in which beer was lowered and cooled by water from the Cross-Cut Canal.

Photos of old photo hanging inside brewery building and of old cooler by Bob Schmidt

Water was let into the Cross-Cut in the latter part of May, 1850. It was then completed to the reservoir junction, then to Worthington and from there on as the Wabash & Erie to Evansville, the terminus. The entire canal was operational from Toledo to Evansville in 1853.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

First Boats

One source says that the first boat to reach Terre Haute on October 25, 1849 was "The Two Polies." Another source says that the first boats to reach the Terre Haute basin were the "E. A. Hannegan" and the "G. R. Walker." Just 34 days after their arrival Thomas H. Blake passed away on November 28, 1849. He died in a Cincinnati, Ohio hotel room from cholera he had caught while working on the canal. His position as trustee was taken over by Thomas Dowling, a Terre Haute newspaper editor and politician."

A passenger trip from Toledo to Terre Haute via canal boat took about 3½ days and cost about \$4.50. A trip from Lafayette to Terre Haute could be made in about 24 hours.

J. Richard Beste, an Englishman, and his family finished their tour in the United States by taking a packet boat from Terre Haute to the north to get back to the east coast. In his book he relates the following about Terre Haute and the canal:

"Tuesday, 12th August [1851]. At five o'clock in the afternoon, we stepped from the little quay at Terre Haute on board the Indiana canal boat. Three horses were harnessed to a rope, about fifty yards ahead of the boat; they started at a moderate trot; and the town, where we had tarried so long, was soon lost to our sight. No other passengers were on board; and we wandered over the vessel, well pleased with the promise it gave us of tolerable accommodation. The captain, a very young man, was very civil and attentive to our wants; and told us that tea would be served at seven o'clock, which there, on that day, was the precise hour of sunset.

"The construction of the canal boat was — in miniature — much the same as that of the lake and river steamers. There was no hold or under-deck; but, on the deck at the stern, were raised the kitchen, steward's room, and offices; in the centre [sic] of the boat, was the large saloon — the sitting room of all by day, the sleeping room of male passengers by night; adjoining it was the ladies' saloon; beyond which again, was a small cabin containing only four berths. This cabin was separated by a doorway and curtain from the ladies' saloon, and on the other side opened upon the bow of the vessel. In it, was a looking-glass, a hand bason [sic], two towels, a comb and a brush, for the use of the ladies. It was a rule in the boats that no gentleman should go into the ladies' saloon without express invitation from the ladies; consequently, the third little room was sacred to the female sex unless entered from the bow, in which case a male occupant would cut off the ladies from their washhouse. Dr. Read had, however, declared that it was necessary that I should have this small room, in or-

der that I might be secure from the draughts and night air that would be let into the men's saloon at night; and the canal boat agents at Terre Haute had contracted to secure the same for me throughout the length of the passage. Dr. Read had particularly insisted on this, fearing that the slightest chill would produce a return of the illness from which I was, in truth, scarcely convalescent.

"A flat roof spread over the whole of the saloons; and on it was piled the luggage; and here passengers walked up and down or sat to enjoy the view.

"Our children had wondered where they were to sleep, as there were no visible berths amid the red moreen curtains that hung round the ladies' saloon, to give it an air of comfort in this August weather: they dreaded to have to pass four nights on the floor, as they had done at Mrs. Long's hotel: but they said they were now more used to hardships than they had then been; and they, also, drew comparative comfort from seeing a washhand bason [sic] and two towels, instead of that amiable American woman's small tin pie dish. The steward, however, soon solved their doubts by hooking up some shelves to the wall, and laying mattresses and sheets upon them.

"We were summoned to tea: but, after the good living of the Prairie House, all complained bitterly of the bad tea and coffee, of the heavy hot corn bread, and of the raw beef steaks.

"I then produced my brandy bottle. Dr. Read had advised me to give a tablespoonful of brandy to each one of my children every night and morning, in the hope of keeping off the ague and fever of the canal: and I administered his prescription regularly as long as we were in the boat."

Years later an old Terre Haute resident, C. C. Oakey, recalled the canal saying:

"The canal days had many interesting features. In the fifties when it was the only means of transportation to and from the north, the arrival of the packet boats was one of the interesting sights, and people went to see them come in, as they went later to the railroad station. The one or two omnibuses of the town made the boats. The first signal of arrival was the pleasing strains from the long horn of the boat. Then would appear the three-horse team, tandem, from behind the little elevation at the curve, trotting their best to give a good motion to the packet, which next approached, its deck covered with passengers. At that moment the long tow-rope was cast loose, and the boat would of its own headway float diagonally across the basin to the old Britton warehouse, which was its landing place and pier. To those who recall those times it seems that some of the sweetest music ever heard was that produced by the boatmen on the long horns as they approached town or signaled the lock-tenders.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

"Traveling by packet was really pleasant and picturesque. There was then neither knowledge nor desire of great speed and frantic haste in traveling, and during the days spent on the decks and in the cabins of the smoothly-gliding packets, in the midst of pleasant company, new friends were made, games were played, politics discussed, and even romances begun. The best packets made about eight miles an hour, and the driver kept his tandem team of three on a sharp trot, the horses being changed often enough along the route to be always fresh. As towns en route were approached, the mellow notes from the horn rang out, and if it was a way station the passengers could alight and become sociable with the townsmen or seek the tavern, which provided 'refreshments for man and beast' tarrying until the warning horn sounded all aboard. The canal offered the near-at-hand view of the country which now is vaunted as one of the charms of travel by automobile and the interurban. It wound through farms, meadows and fields, by long stretches of dense forest, giving views of hills and valleys and far-stretching prairies."

Before long a flour mill, foundry, planing mill, brewery, ice house, candle factory, tannery and a blast furnace were soon built along the canal's banks. Things seemed to be going well and Dowling took his position seriously. However, he was soon faced with natural disasters, the "Clay-County Regulators" and the more dependable railroads that led to the canal's demise.

The canal era in Terre Haute, which basically began in 1850, practically ended in 1860. In 1858 when the canal ceased being a commercial highway, the Rothschilds abandoned the enterprise. Chauncey Rose and other leading business men of Terre Haute organized a company to keep the Cross-Cut portion in repair and operate it for local trade between Terre Haute and Worthington. Rose was the head with W. D. Griswold serving as vice-president and Gen. Charles Cruft serving as a treasurer. Just a little more than two years later, this traffic stopped when the west bank of the canal in Terre Haute was invaded by the Wabash River.

Canal Auctioned

On February 24-25, 1876, an auction of statewide canal lands was held at the Vigo county courthouse in Terre Haute by Dowling and his chief clerk, John B. Hager. Dowling died ten months later.

The Terre Haute *Journal* of February 28 and 29, 1876, carried the following articles about the auction:

WHO BIDS. Sale of the Wabash and Erie Canal and Lands.

Yesterday was the date fixed for the long expected sale of the canal lands. It began promptly at 10 o'clock A.M. in the

Vigo Court room. The apartment was crowded with gentlemen interested, from all along the line, from Fort Wayne to Evansville. A large number were present also from this city.

Judge S. B. Gookins, Master in Chancery of the canal, conducted the sale. With him was Col. Thos. Dowling, resident trustee. Mr. George C. Day was the clerk of the sale, and Mr. J. B. Hager was the clerk for the bond-holders.

The sale was prefaced by a statement from Judge Gookins concerning the lands to be sold, the terms and conditions, decision as to water power, etc.

The first part offered for sale was the line of the canal from Lafayette east to the State line. The first bid was one of \$23,000. It was secured by Jonathan K. Gapen for the sum of \$66,000.

The conditions were also that it should be sold separately in sections. This was done, the sections being 22 miles each in extent. In this manner it brought \$67,725.

The canal was then offered as a whole, a party from Logansport and vicinity bidding against Mr. Gapen and expecting to make decision afterward to suit themselves. The bids then went up to \$85,000, at which price it was sold to Mr. Gapen.

This was the most important part of the work done yesterday. The lands sold were mostly odd parcels of little value, and the total amount including the above did not reach more than \$110,000. Of this the canal in Vigo county outside of the city brought over \$1,700, by J. K. Gapen; and that in Vanderburgh county outside the city of Evansville brought over \$2,700. The canal bed inside those two cities is reserved for private sale.

Citizens of Terre Haute were among the best buyers, among whom were William Mack, J. K. Gapen, R. N. Hudson, C. W. Mascourt, Josephus Collett and others.

The sale continued from 10 o'clock to 5 p.m., with an intermission of about an hour and a half at noon.

Today will be sold Splunge Creek Reservoir land, about 3,000 acres, which it is thought will be in good demand, and on which bidding will be as spirited as during the sale of yesterday. Besides this are to be sold lands in Clay, Greene, Pike and Gibson counties.

The second article reported:

CANAL SALE. Winding up the Auction.

Yesterday the sale of the Wabash & Erie canal lands continued in the Circuit Court room Judge Gookins officiating.

The reservoir lots were among those sold.

There was quite a number of separate parcels and tracts of which sale was made mostly of little value. Bidding was good. The reservoir lands were gobbled by the neighbors and residents in that township.

Johnathan K. Gapen was by far the most prominent bidder of yesterday, as he had been on Thursday. He bought about 2,000 acres of land, the greater part of which was in Vigo county. It ranged in price from \$6 to \$25 per acre.

The sale was concluded about the middle of the afternoon. Being in the charge of the United States it is not a matter that concerns our county officers to a great extent.

Thus does the old canal pass into other hands. Without regard or preference as to ownership, we may say that it is a satisfactory change, for while a great extent of land is brought into actual use, the canal bed is still sufficiently unbroken as to serve

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

for purposes of transportation, if favorable conditions should arise.

Col. R. N. Hudson, an attorney and publisher of the *Terre Haute Gazette* and later *Journal* drew up and got the state legislature to adopt "The State Dept Bill." It provided for the state debt to be paid and the school fund to be placed on a permanent basis thus preserving the financial reputation of the state. He also organized the scheme for closing the trust of the Wabash and Erie Canal. This finally settled the financial matter with the canal stock holders.

Railroads

In 1852 the Terre Haute and Richmond Railroad was completed leading eventually to a rail network with Terre Haute as a rail center. Roads were improved and more bridges were built across the Wabash River and the creeks that fed into it. All these modes of transportation greatly influenced the development of the town.

Education

Lucius H. Scott opened the first school in Honey Creek township, but became sick and the school failed. There were early teachers but the first whose name is known is R. W. Gail, who taught in Terre Haute in 1824. In 1827 a brick school house was built on the northwest corner of Fifth and Walnut streets.

Education was important and as the city grew more schools were built. Parents wanted higher business and college education for their children. As early as 1840 St. Marys-of-the-Woods was established followed by Coates College and Terre Haute Commercial College in 1862, Indiana State Normal School in 1870 (Indiana State University today), and Rose Polytechnic Institute in 1874 (Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology today).

The Civil War impacted Terre Haute. Although pork packing in 1852 was at its peak with 108,79 hogs processed, it declined when the war prevented trade with the South and when large processing centers arose in Chicago and Kansas City.

In 1866 the mule-drawn streetcars were replaced with electric-powered trolleys. These were cleaner, quieter and, along with the railroads, provided transportation for residents to baseball games, Chautauqua's, circuses, dramas, operas, picnics, and other amusements.

The railroads, which required oil and iron for their construction and upkeep, also had their influence. With the 1867 discovery of block coal in Clay County

located southeast of Vigo County, they provided a means of transporting coal suitable for iron production.

Agriculture

Farming was the main occupation of the early settlers. They found a need to be organized. They formed the first Indiana Grange in 1869 in Honey Creek township.

Iron Furnaces

Between 1867-1872 several iron furnaces were built around Terre Haute, soon followed by foundries and rolling mills. These mills turned out items as small as nails up to rails, bridge iron and even railroad cars. Ranked third in the state in coal mining and fifth in manufacturing in 1870, Vigo County dreamed of becoming the "Pittsburgh of the West." Foundries and rolling mills that turned out nails, rails, railroad cars and bridge iron went into production. However, inferior ore and the development of the steel industry in Lake County, ended the dream. One by one the iron furnaces closed.

Social life improved with offerings of theatrical performances and operas at the Naylor Opera House, which was built in 1870 and destroyed by fire in 1896. It was replaced by the Grand Opera House with seating for 1,500.

Coal

David Thomas from New York first mentioned that there was coal in the region in a letter to his eastern friends in 1816. He had noticed out-croppings of coal at points along the river and the creeks that fed it around the vicinity of Terre Haute. He stated that he thought that Terre Haute had an industrial future. An unsuccessful attempt to ship coal from Terre Haute by flatboat was made by Jacob Thomas in 1838. The loaded boat was left stranded when the river receded. Then when it rose again, the loaded boat sank. He made no further attempts at shipping coal because there was plentiful and cheap firewood available at the time and there was no demand for coal. However the development of the coal fields and coal mining did not start until much later. Then the railroads could provide reliable transportation for this type of fuel from the mines to the industries. Coal mining became Terre Haute's principal industry.

Coal miners were members of the Knights of Labor. Terre Haute became the home of the Indiana Coal Operators' Association. When the United Mine Workers of America was formed in 1890, District 11 headquarters made Terre Haute the arbitrator of Indiana's coal-

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mining relations.

During World War I, 1918 was the year of peak coal production in Indiana when 30,000,000 tons were mined. By 1932 production had declined to 12,500,000 for the state. Vigo county had to change to strip mining rather than shaft mining. As of 1941 Terre Haute had three mining companies with their offices in the city.

Labor Unions

Workers in Terre Haute's brickyards, breweries, coal mines, distilleries, and railroads saw the need for labor unions. The first one organized was the Typographical Union in 1873 and by 1900 there were twenty-seven unions in the town. Socialist Party presidential candidate Eugene V. Debs, a native of Terre Haute, was influential in several of these local unions. The creation of the American Federation of Labor in 1886 was the result of an organizational meeting of Midwest craft unions held in Terre Haute in 1881.

Terre Haute has received Nation-wide attention from strikes by labor unions. In 1922, it had a 9-month-long coal strike. In 1935, 600 Columbian Enameling and Stamping Company workers walked out demanding a 10 per cent wage increase and union shop. The 58 imported professional strikebreakers were ordered to be removed by 48 American Federation of Labor unions or else a general sympathetic strike would be declared. On July 22 around 26,000 other workers and many merchants quit work in a strike that the *New York Times* said was "virtually 100 per cent effective." The governor declared martial law with no picketing allowed. He sent in 2,00 National Guardsmen, who tear-gassed 1,800 pickets. Federal mediators took on the dispute and eventually the National Labor Relations Board upheld the strikers' demands and ordered those fired by the company to rehire them. The company appealed to the U. S. Supreme Court, which ordered the Board's decision be set aside.

Terre Haute's City Hall was built in 1874, the *Federal Building* in 1887, the one-mile Four-Cornered Racetrack for American trotters in 1886 and a new County Courthouse in 1888. The 1890s saw the erection of the Union and the Big Four railroad depots.

Agricultural produce became the county's most valuable commodity by 1900 with coal coming in second place. Acres of corn were processed into alcoholic beverages and food items. Dating from 1837, the Terre Haute Brewing Company was incorporated in 1889 and registered its Champagne Velvet beer in 1904. Of the local mills, the Hudnut Milling Company was the largest producing hominy grits, corn flour, corn oil, etc. Terre Haute became not only the 5th in national production of

distilled liquor, but also the fifth most important national center in flour and gristmill products.

The organization of a fire department and the purchase of steam fire engines improved the city's fire protection. The telephone aided communication and an up-to-date waterworks provided safer water. Health issues were met by the establishment of a city health department and St. Anthony's hospital in 1882 followed by Union Hospital in 1892. Also the Big Four and Union Railroads' depots were erected in the 1890s.

Noted Citizens

Terre Haute produced the following eminent people in politics, religion, sports and the arts:

- Dr. Lyman Abbott, clergyman, author, editor of *The Outlook*, First Congregation Church 1860-65
- Vic Aldridge, baseball major league pitcher
- Claude Bowers, historian and diplomat
- Max Carey, Baseball Hall of Fame, record-breaking base stealer
- Benjamin Sherman (Scatman) Crothers, actor, comedian and Musician
- Eugene V. Debs, Socialist Party presidential candidate, labor leader
- Theodore Dreiser, novelist, brother of Paul Dresser
- Paul Dresser, songwriter *On the Banks of the Wabash Far Away*
- Max Ehrmann, poet wrote *A Prayer* and *Desiderata*
- Anthony (Skeets) Gallagher, stage and screen comedian
- Ida Husted Harper, journalist, biographer of Susan B. Anthony, began journalist career at *Saturday Evening Mail* in Terre Haute
- Tommy John, baseball major-league pitcher
- Clarence, Harry, Julius and Louis Johnson, produced in board boat engines, then made one of American's earliest monoplane flights in a plane they fashioned, had a boat motor factory in Terre Haute that was destroyed by the 1913 tornado, and later manufactured the Johnson outboard motor in Waukegan, IL.
- Albert Kussner, internationally known composer
- Amalia Kussner, miniaturist
- Ellen Church Marshall, World's first airline stewardess and Union Hospital administrator in Terre Haute 1952-65.
- Rose Melville (Rose Smock) star in *Sis Hopkins*
- Arthur Nehf, baseball major league pitcher
- Thomas N Nelson, minister to Chile and Mexico
- Marie Roslyn (Rose Fehrenbach), musical comedy
- Edward James Roye, fifth president of Liberia
- Everett Sanders, congressman and Calvin Coolidge's secretary
- Jane Dabney Shackelford, teacher, wrote *The Child's Story of the Negro* in 1838

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Janet Scudder, sculptor

Richard W. Thompson, secretary of the navy under President Rutherford B. Hayes and called "Ancient Mariner of the Wabash"

Paul (Dizzy) Trout, baseball major-league pitcher

John Palmer Usher, interior secretary under President Abraham Lincoln

Daniel W. Voorhees, Senator a.k.a. "Tall Sycamore of the Wabash," debater

Gilbert Wilson, mural painter

In 1905 a steel, concrete and brick bridge with two sidewalks and double trolley tracks for use by interurbans replaced the 1865 wooden covered bridge across the Wabash River.

Corruption

By the late 1800s a Terre Haute mayor had become so indebted to a political machine backed by brewery money that he allowed his chief of police and his safety board to overlook enforcing closing hours of saloons. Fraudulent election practices such as stuffed ballot boxes, repeat voting, padded registration lists and bribed election officials took place. There was extortion, violence and a "red-light" district. Terre Haute became known a "sporting" town, the "Paris of Indiana," and "sin city." Citizens became outraged, formed a coalition, and petitioned for state aid. In 1906 Mayor Edwin Bidamin was impeached, in 1911 Mayor Louis A. Gerhardt was arraigned for contempt of court, and in 1915 Mayor Donn Roberts and 20 others were convicted and served time for election fraud.

Decline

Prohibition after World War I closed the breweries, distilleries and bottle producing plants. The Pennsylvania Railroad's shops closed in 1923 and, besides the many employees who lost their jobs, the small iron and steel firms that supplied the shops were hurt. Coal miners were hurt when strip mining in southwest Indiana replaced the deep coal mines. Coal companies consolidating, cheap coal being available in Kentucky and West Virginia, and competition from petroleum and electricity increased the problem. Over 12,000 miners lost their jobs by 1930.

The repeal of prohibition in 1933 helped reduce the jobless rate by reopening breweries, distilleries, bottle plants, and retail liquor stores. Farmers growing grain became prosperous again.

During World War II Terre Haute produced food items and its citizens worked at three nearby ordnance plants. It had the largest food manufacturing plant under one roof, Quaker Maid of the Great Atlantic and Pacific

Tea Company. It also had the United Service Organization (USO) and was the foremost recruitment center for navy Waves in the United States.

After the war the jobless rate kept increasing and there was flight from the city. Adding to the problem was the 1957 disclosure that Terre Haute was a base for a large gambling syndicate. However, in the 1960s urban renewal and Indiana State University's building program to house its doubling student body was helpful. Civic groups organized and focused on the city's problems. Job growth was paced through the 70s and in 1979 everyone was more concerned with Larry Bird being named College Player of the Year and basketball than they were with unemployment and urban flight.

By 1980 Terre Haute's population was down to the population prior to World War I —61,125 residents. The 1982 closing of Columbia Records, the city's largest employer at that time, eliminated 3,500 jobs and led to other plant closings, a depressed real estate market, and inflation. The newspapers and airport had disputes between labor and management, police lost control and the crime increased at an alarming rate. Many downtown structures were razed.

Efforts were made in the mid-1980s to stabilize the economy and, bring in new stores and factories. The Digital Audio Disc Corporation opened in 1984, the only U. S. factory to make compact discs at that time. Its first release was *Born in the U.S.A.* by Bruce Springsteen. The hit tripled the factory's employment list and one million discs were produced per month.

A Brighter Future

Local pride was boosted in recent years when Terre Haute received national and state awards for volunteerism and citizen participation in downtown rehabilitation. Work is being done on the core city to make it a professional and business center adding to its already existing governmental, educational, cultural, sports and entertainment features. Railroad overpasses have eased traffic congestion. There are over 125 buildings eligible for placement on the National Register of Historic Places. A Visitor's Bureau and the Alliance for Growth and Progress are positive steps in bringing Terre Haute forward in the future.

Terre Haute is the largest city in Vigo county. Other communities either during the canal era or today include: Allendale, Atherton, Barnhart Town, Belt Junction, Blackhawk, Bradshaw, Brown Jug Corner, Burnett, Coal Bluff, Cobb, Dewey, Ehrmandale, Ferguson Hill, Fontanet, Forest, Glen Ayre, Harrison, Hazelgreen, Hickory Island, Hutton, Keller, Larimer Hill, Lewis, Libertyville, Liggett, Lockport, New Goshen, North Terre Haute,

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Otter Creek Junction, Parkview, Pimento, Pine Ridge, Prairie Creek, Prairieton, Preston, Riley, St. Mary of the Woods, Sandcut, Sandford, Seelyville, Seifert, Shepardsville, Southwood, Spelerville, Spring Hill, Swalls, Tabertown, Taylorville, Tecumseh, Terre Haute, Vigo, West New Goshen, West Terre Haute, Woodgate and Youngstown. In this book we will only cover those that were along the canal.

and are stored in a lake in Terre Haute's Fowler Park.

Culvert 151 was built around 1837-39 and was over 150 years old. The foundation timbers, found just two feet below the creek bed covered with silt, distributed the weight of the stone and balanced the culvert to keep it level. The timbers were cut from white oak trees that were over 300 years old at the time they were felled. They ranged in length from 20-40 feet, most measuring 14 inches square with at least two 28 inches by 14 inches around. Square headed nails were visible in the timbers.

Remaining Cross-Cut Prism and Structures South of Terre Haute



Top: Canal prism remains near the site of Canal Road Bridge No. 107 and timber crib Locks 43 and 44 on McDaniel Road in 1991.
Bottom: Same as above only seen in the opposite direction.

Photos by Bob Schmidt



The Canal Engineers Report of 1853 describes Culvert 151, the only arch stone culvert on the Cross-Cut, as follows:

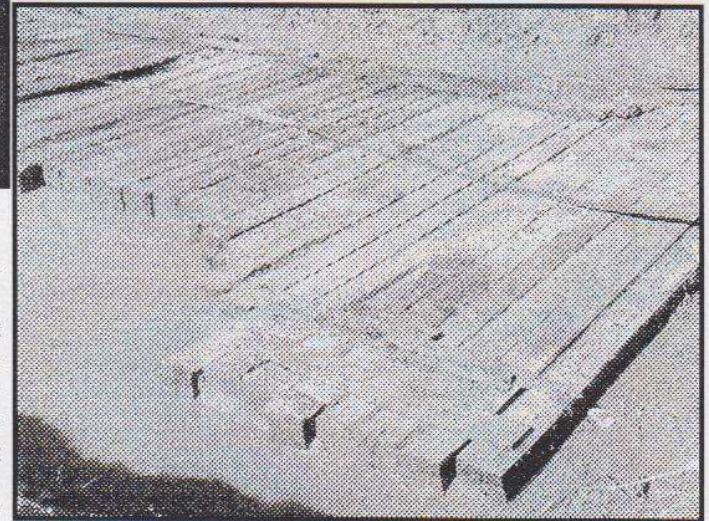
"Culvert 151, Little Honey Creek, cut stone arch 15 feet chord, timber foundation extending across the channel of creek and full length of culvert."



Right: Photo by Larry Liggett 2004

Culvert 151

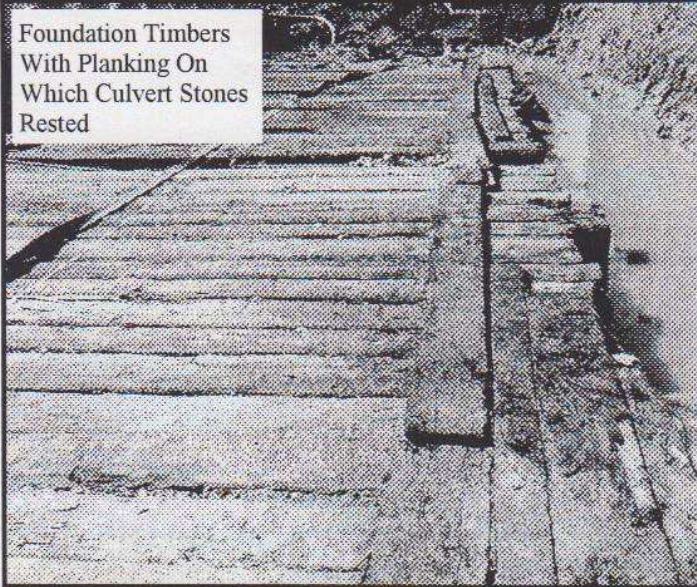
Below: Foundation timbers
Photo by Jeff Kochler 2007



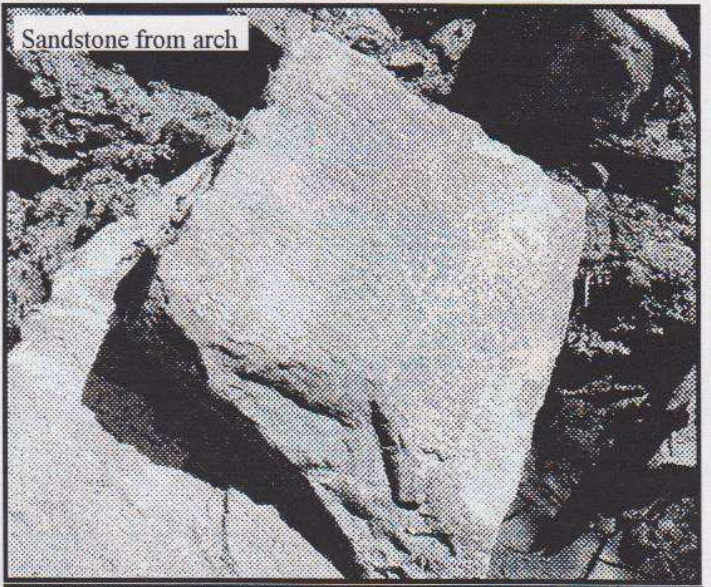
Remnants of Culvert 151 that carried the Cross-Cut across Little Honey Creek existed until recently. The culvert stood in the way of a bridge that was part of the 641 Bypass around Terre Haute. The stones that remained atop the foundation timbers were photographed before demolition began. Once the timber foundation was cleared it was photographed showing not only the foundation timbers but the planking as well. The timbers were documented, numbered and removed

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

Foundation Timbers
With Planking On
Which Culvert Stones
Rested



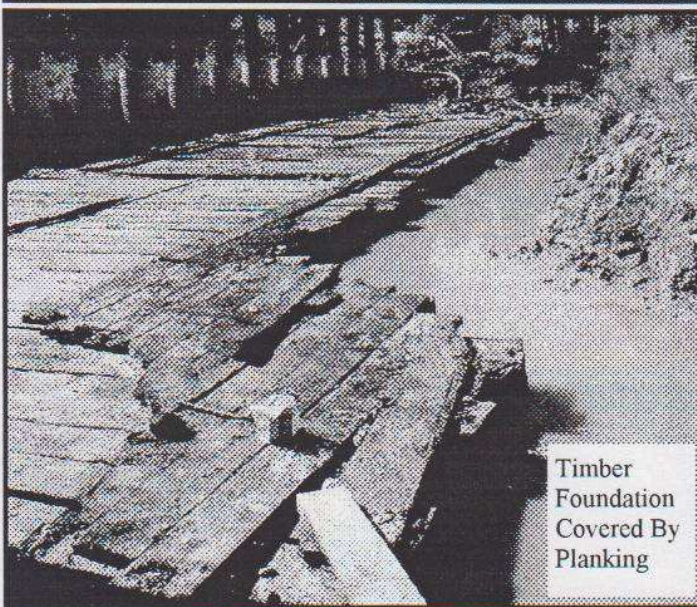
Sandstone from arch



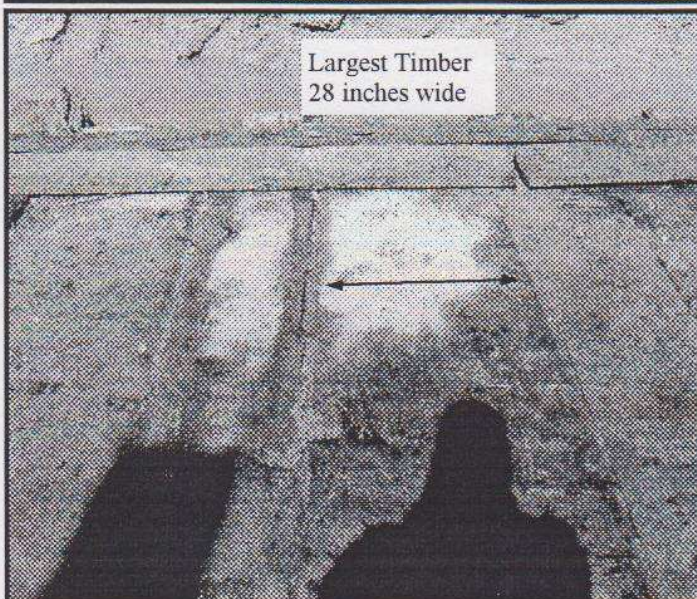
Hammer dressed
Sandstone



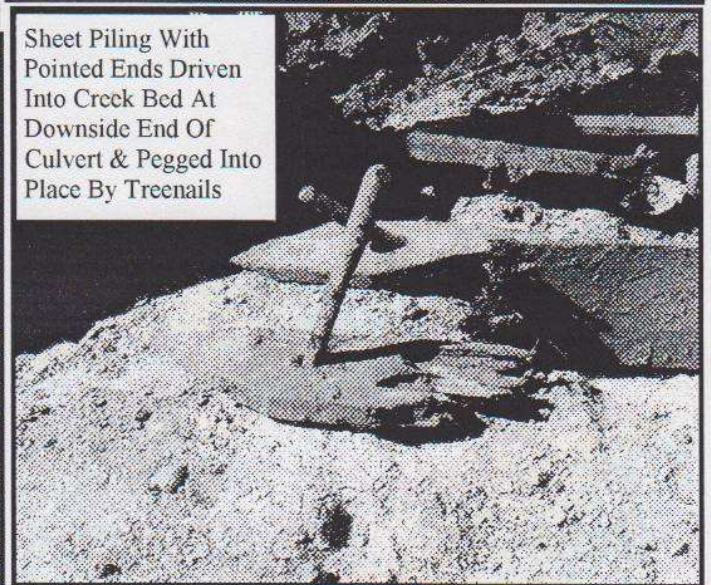
Timber
Foundation
Covered By
Planking



Largest Timber
28 inches wide

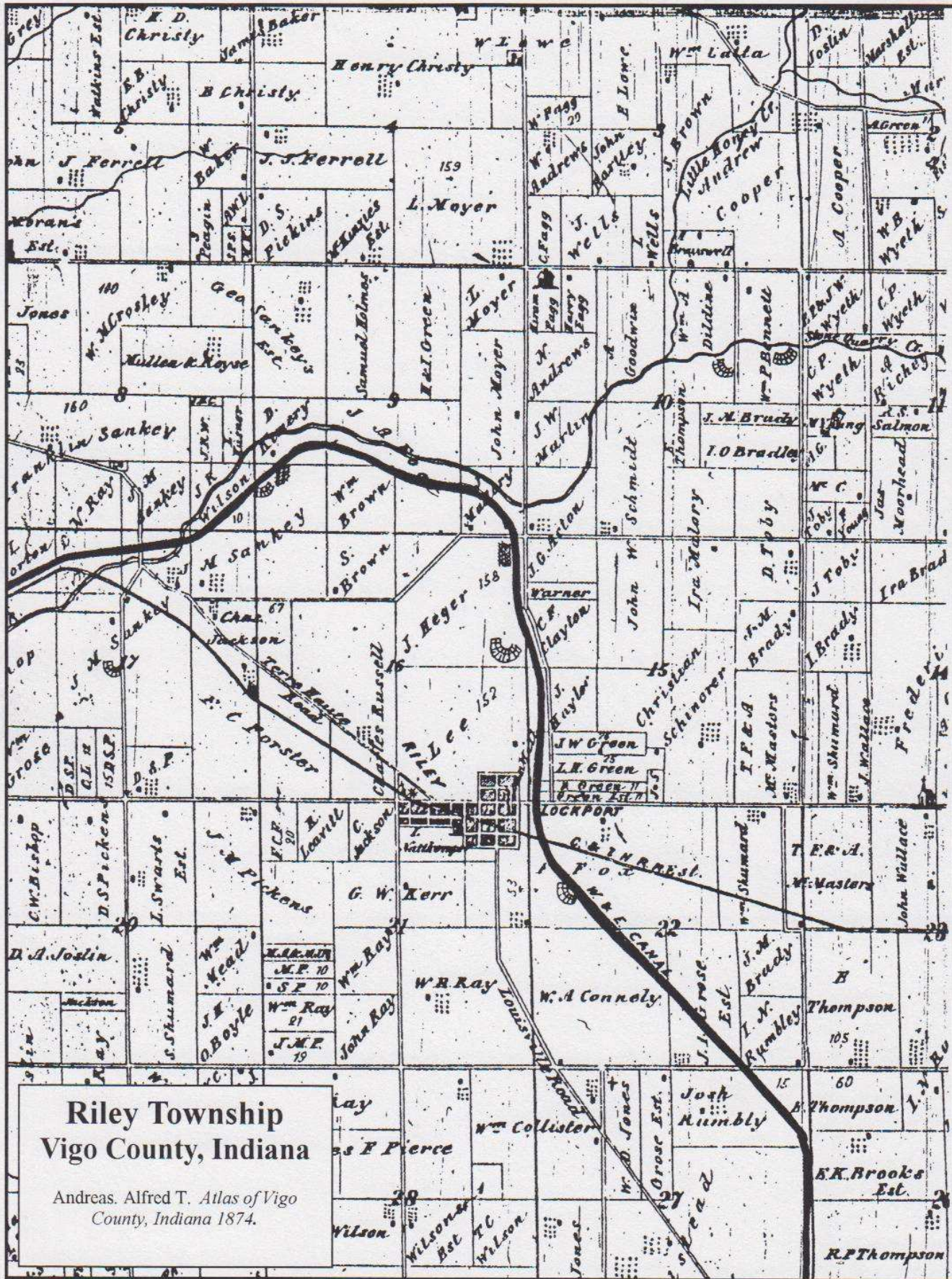


Sheet Piling With
Pointed Ends Driven
Into Creek Bed At
Downside End Of
Culvert & Pegged Into
Place By Treenails



Photos of Culvert 151 by Jeff Koehler

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL



Riley Township
Vigo County, Indiana

Andreas, Alfred T. Atlas of Vigo
County, Indiana 1874.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

RILEY (LOCKPORT)

Riley, a small community in Vigo County, is located in Riley Township southeast of Terre Haute. During the canal era it was called Lockport and was situated on the canal slightly north of its present location. During canal times the town of Hazelgreen was located slightly south of today's Riley.

Riley Township is bordered by Lost Creek Township on the north, Pierson Township on the south, Honey Creek Township on the west, and Clay County on the east. Honey Creek flows through the township. In 1818 the first settlers to the township settled near its southern border and around 1822 were joined by others. The area east of Lockport (Riley) was not settled until a later period.

Pioneers avoided settling on the prairie with its marshy land and chose the higher timber land on which to build their crude log cabins. Lack of roads and the distance to the mills added further to their hardships. Rolla's mill on Eel River required an overnight journey to avoid the green-head horse flies that lived in the tall prairie grass. Markle's mill was located on Otter Creek. Even further were the mills at Roseville and Raccoon as much as two and a half days journey from their homes.

Around 1830 the northern portion of the township was settled. It seemed to be somewhat more progressive than the other settlements. It had the township's first school built in 1834.

Lockport Platted

Lockport was platted by Nathaniel Donham in 1836. He named it for the three canal locks in the area. It was a good place for a town since it took time for the canal boats to pass through the locks. Passengers could get off the boat and purchase food, beverages or other goods in the town.

Four years later, when a post office was established, they found that a town of Lockport was already in existence in Carroll County. They renamed the town Riley, for the township, which had received its name from settlers who had come from Riley Township in Butler County, Ohio. While the canal was being built through the area it was nicknamed Battle Row for the many fights that took place between the Irish canal builders.

Religion played an important role in these early settlers. As early as 1820 services were held in homes. In 1840 a Methodist meeting-house was built about a mile east of Lockport (Riley) and that same year a Disciples church was organized south of the town.

Although there were areas of settlement, they were not villages. The only actual village in the township was Lockport, which was laid out and settled during the construction of the Wabash & Erie Canal. The land was originally owned by Nathaniel Donham.

Cross-Cut Canal

According to William J. Ball, resident canal engineer in 1853, "the best lock in the State of Indiana" (Lock 47) was built at Riley by Robert Logan of Pike County. It was special in that most of the locks on the 468-mile-long Wabash & Erie Canal were built of timber and not fine cut stone. It was 10 feet tall and over 100 feet long if one includes the approaches to the lock chamber. It raised/lowered canal boats 8.5 feet. The lock fell to ruin after the canal was abandoned in 1874. Today only the western wall remains fairly intact with a few stones of the eastern wall visible nearby. The stones of the east wall were closer to the road and it is not uncommon for stones to be removed for use as corner stones for barns or for building other structures once the locks are abandoned. The lock chamber is filled with four or five feet of sediment. The location of its by-pass can be seen.

In 1971 the Riley Lions Club helped the Indiana Junior Historical Society purchase the lock property for \$3,000. At that time the society sent volunteers to Riley to clean up the site. The Lions Club members even housed the volunteers. Suddenly their work ended and the site was left to become overgrown with brush and weeds.

On February 11, 2002 an article in the Terre Haute *Tribune-Star* entitled "Rare Lock Repair" said that Patrick Martin, chief transportation planner for the West Central Indiana Economic Development District in Terre Haute, had written a grant for \$72,000 and presented it to the Indiana Department of Transportation on December 15, 2001, seeking the development of a Vigo County park on the 10-acre property where Lock 47 is located. It said that Bill Bryan, who helped clean up the lock 30 years ago, hoped the project would be funded. If accepted Martin might seek more funding from the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century.

Archeologists wanted to dig through the sediment in the lock to find its timber floor using a Giddings auger to take solid earth cores. Then they wanted to use a back hoe to clean out a section of the lock.

Part of the research was to use a \$30,000 magnetometer, which detects metal fluxes in the soil and different densities of the soil. The readings are uploaded onto a computer that analyses them. They hoped in this way to find the lock floor, the cellar of the lock keeper's

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

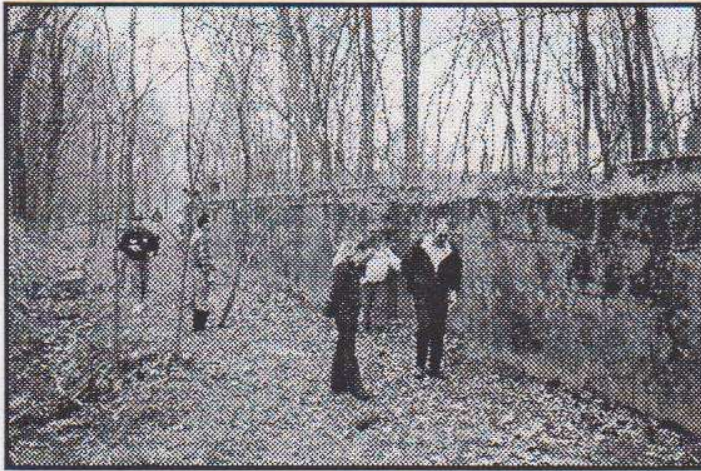


Above:
Isaac Oliver Lowe,
born 9-15-1839
died 5-4-1918
stands atop
the west wall
of Lock 47 near
Riley, Indiana.



Below:
Warner Lowe,
born 7-19-1882
died in car wreck
sits in the middle
of the first row
with his pupils
from the Riley
school on the west
wall of Lock 47.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL



house, refuse pits and outhouses. Once the site was re-searched they hoped to rebuild the eastern wall of the lock and build trails in the adjoining park.

"State Grant Will Benefit Riley Lock" was the title of an article in the *Terre Haute Tribune-Star* of September 6, 2002. Vigo County would receive \$400,000 from the state to develop the new county park near Riley. Vigo County raised an \$80,000 match.

This park is long in coming. Six years later (May 2008) they finally did the laser scan of the lock. They took over 12,000 images and created a three dimensional wire-frame model with the details of the stone blocks on display.



Further archeological work will be done in the area for the small parking lot. A trail to nearby Riley Elementary School for additional parking needs approval from the school before it can be created. The timbers from Culvert 151 that were removed for the 641 bypass may be used to form a box culvert in or near the park. They need to either find stone for the east wall or rebuild it with concrete. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2009 or 2010.

The other two locks located at Riley were locks 48 and 49. They were crib locks made of timber, which deteriorated. Only the timbers that were covered with water remain. Lock 48 had an 8 ft. lift and Lock 49 had a 9 ft. lift.



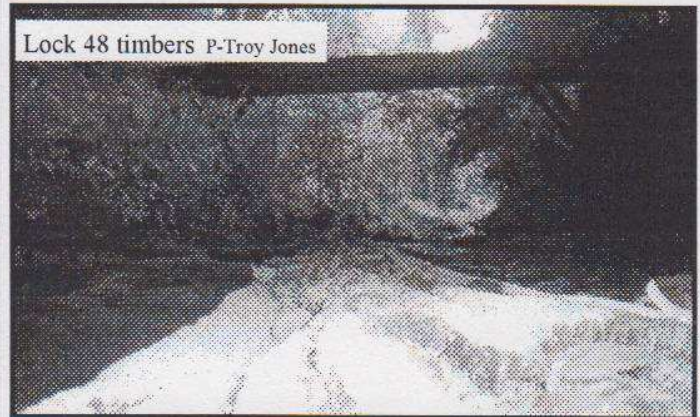
Riley Lock 47

Top: On the 1994 spring tour CSI members looked at the construction of the lock's west wall and saw that the center capstones were missing. They noted what was left of the short east wall seen on the left side of the picture.

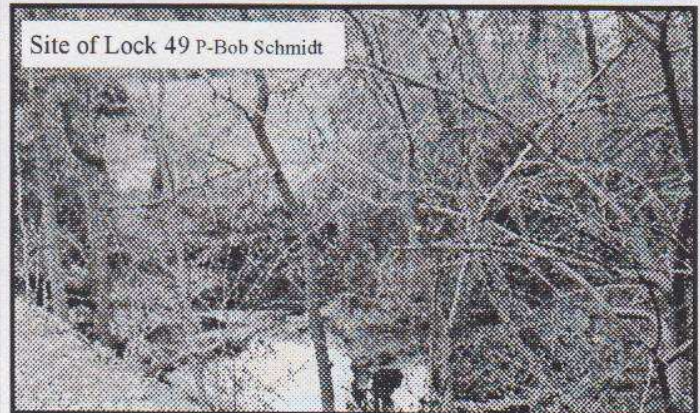
Center: Jeff Koehler stood before the north end of the west wall on a CSI board tour in November 2006. The tumble was located on the right side of the picture by the big bush.

Bottom: CSI members looked at the location of the tumble/bypass and noted that other structures were built there.

Photos by Bob Schmidt



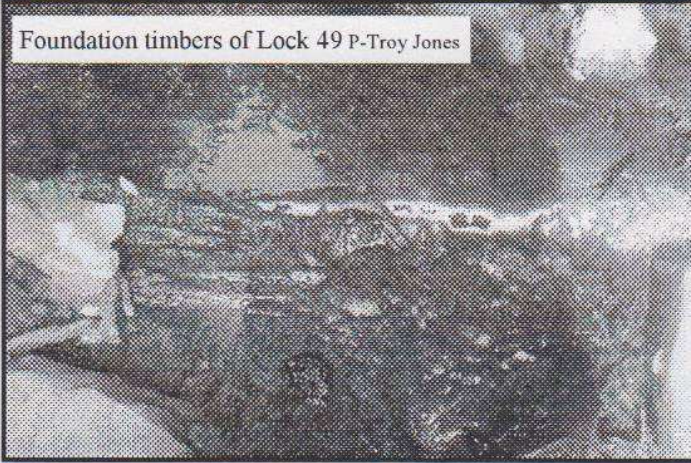
Lock 48 timbers P-Troy Jones



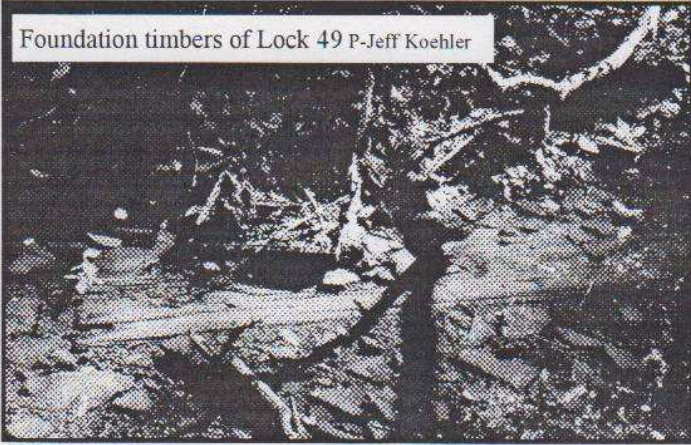
Site of Lock 49 P-Bob Schmidt

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

Foundation timbers of Lock 49 P-Troy Jones

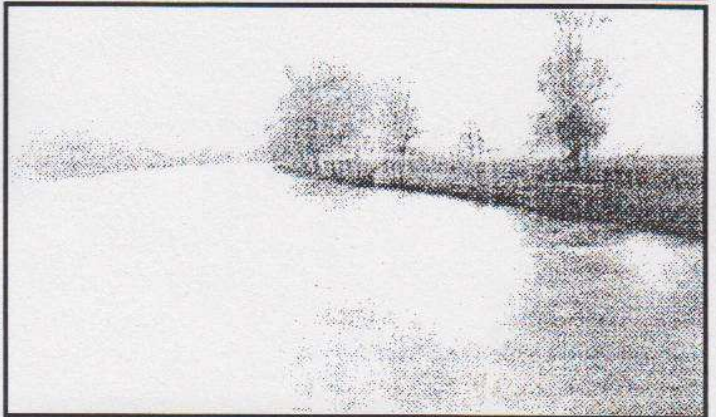


Foundation timbers of Lock 49 P-Jeff Koehler



Above: The Blue Hole is all that remains of the Cross-Cut summit level that is watered. Photo by Bob Schmidt

Below: This photo shows what the Cross-Cut looked like in the 1950s between Riley and Old Hill in Clay County.



The Blue Hole at the summit level of the Cross-Cut is fed from the Eel River Feeder Canal. It is what remains of the summit level deep cut of the Cross-Cut. During canal times this level extended from Lock 49 in Vigo County to Lock 50 at Splunge Creek Reservoir in Clay County.

1994 CSI spring tour at the Blue Hole Photo by Bob Schmidt



CLAY COUNTY CANAL STRUCTURES

Apr 25, 2008

WABASH & ERIE CANAL BY INDIANA COUNTY

NO. 12 of 19 Counties

CLAY COUNTY

ESTABLISHED: February 12, 1825
NAMED FOR: Henry Clay of Kentucky

SIZE: 358 sq miles
CANAL TOWNS:

BRAZIL

COUNTY SEAT - BRAZIL

ESTABLISHED: 1877 first was Bowling Green in 1828
FOUNDERS:

1830
1840
1860
1870
Est 2006

NAMED FOR: Brazil South American Country
NICKNAME: W&E reached here June 1850

8212

SUMMARY OF STRUCTURES IN CLAY COUNTY

	<u>LIFT</u>	<u>QTY</u>	<u>NUMBERS</u>	<u>LENGTH OF CANAL IN COUNTY</u> 18 = MILES
Stone Locks	0.0	0		
Timber Locks	36.7	5	No. 50-54	
County Totals	36.7	5		
Guard Locks		1	At Eel Dam	
Other Locks		1	On Birch Creek Feeder	
Aqueduct - Open		0		
Aqueduct - Covered		1	No. 161	
Stone Arches		6	No. 157-160 + 2 ON Feeders	
Timber Arches		2	Eel River & Birch Creek	
Box Culverts		1	Eel River Dam	
Feeders to main Canal		11	No. 112-118 + 4 on feeders	
Slackwater Crossings		4		
Dams				
Road Bridges				
Waste Weir				
Flood Gates				

WATERWAYS

Big Slough
Little Slough
Birch Creek
Pitt's Branch
Eel River
Splunge Creek
Waitkin's Creek
Prairie Creek

TOWNS

Kossuth

CANAL TOWNSHIPS

Perry
Sugar Ridge
Lewis

NO. 12 of 19 Counties

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Guard Locks		1	At Eel Dam	
Other Locks				
Aqueduct - Open		1	On Birch Creek Feeder	
Aqueduct - Covered				
Stone Arches		0		
Timber Arches		1	No. 161	
Box Culverts		6	No. 157-160 + 2 ON Feeders	
Feeders to main Canal		2	Eel River & Birch Creek	
Slackwater Crossings				
Dams		1	Eel River Dam	
Road Bridges		11	No, 112-118 + 4 on feeders	
Waste Weir		4		
Flood Gates				
<u>CANAL TOWNSHIPS</u>		<u>TOWNS</u>		<u>WATERWAYS</u>
Perry				Big Slough
Sugar Ridge				Little Slough
Lewis		Kossuth		Birch Creek
				Pitt's Branch
				Eel River
				Splunge Creek
				Watkin's Creek
				Prairie Creek

CLAY COUNTY
CANAL STRUCTURES

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

Apr 25, 2008

DETAILS OF WABASH & ERIE CANAL IN CLAY COUNTY

Official distances in bold
MILEAGE
FROM IN
ST LINE COUNTY

1 Chain = 66 Feet
SPANS / DIMENSIONS

1847 REPORT & MISC DETAILS

ROAD LOCATIONS

GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS

TYPE

ST LINE COUNTY	MILEAGE	FROM	IN	GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS	ROAD LOCATIONS	1847 REPORT & MISC DETAILS	TYPE	SPANS / DIMENSIONS
243	0	X	L-1	Into Reservoir		Culvert No. 157 Culvert No. 158	Timber - Box Timber - Box	2 spans 1 span 11 Ft x 2 Ft 10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
			L-2	Vigo County Line		Eel River Feeder Eel River Dam Guard Lock on west end		5.5 Miles 264 Ft 16.5 Ft high
			L-3	Big Slough		Aqueduct Culvert on feeder 2 - Road Bridges on feeder	Open-Trunk Timber - Box	3 x 27 Ft 2 spans 81 Ft 10 Ft x 2 Ft
			L-4	Little Slough		Birch Creek Reservoir Feeder from Reservoir to Eel Feeder Waste Weir 2 - Road Bridges on feeder Small Culvert on feeder	Built in 1853 4 cast iron gates Timber - Box	1000 acres 4 Miles 300 Ft
			L-5	At Eel River Feeder		Waste Weir Lock No. 50 Lock No. 51 Culvert for Splunge Creek Feed Splunge Creek Reservoir Road Bridge No. 112 Road Bridge No. 113 Culvert No. 159 Road Bridge No. 114 Road Bridge No. 115 Waste Weir - same as mouth of Eel River	Timber Wood - Crib Wood - Crib 4 cast iron gates Built in 1850 Old Hill / Rawleys Mill Timber - Box	50 ft 8 ft Lift 8 ft Lift 4000 acres 12 Ft x 3 Ft
			L-6	Splunge Creek	lower end of reservoir	Road Bridge No. 112 Road Bridge No. 113 Culvert No. 159 Road Bridge No. 114 Road Bridge No. 115 Waste Weir - same as mouth of Eel River Lock No. 52 Culvert No. 160 Road Bridge No. 116 Waste Weir - same as mouth of Eel River Culvert No. 161 Lock No. 53 Road Bridge No. 117 Road Bridge No. 118 Lock No. 54	7.1 ft Lift 3 spans 6.6 ft Lift 7 Ft Lift	10 Ft x 3 Ft 15 Ft Chord
				Watkins Creek	Hooker's Mill At Kossuth At Kossuth			
				Prairie Creek	Just below Prairie Creek Road to New Brunswick Road to New Brunswick			
261	18			Greene County Line				
264	3			Greene Co to Owen Co. (see Greene Co.)				

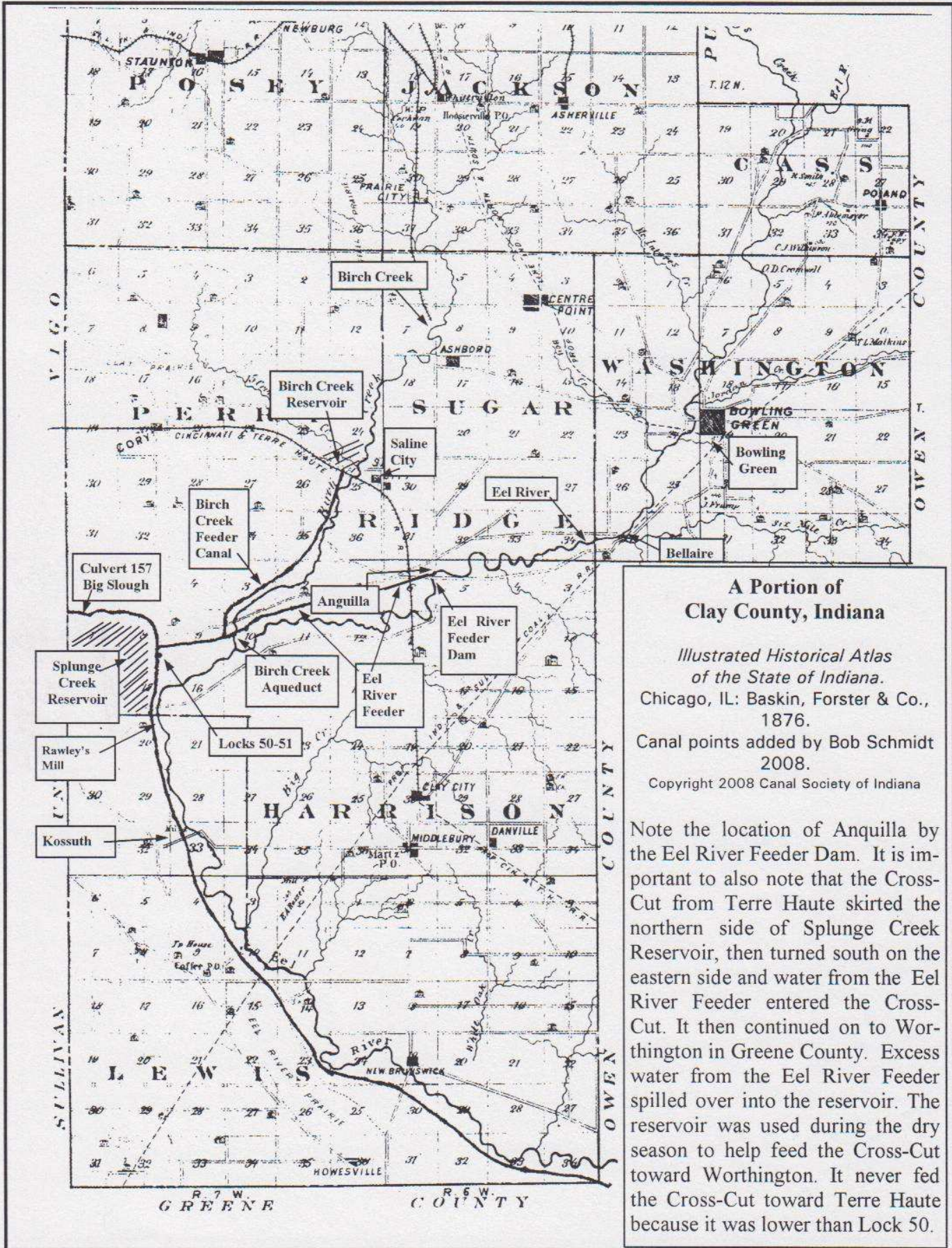
Official distances in bold

DETAILS OF WABASH & ERIE CANAL IN CLAY COUNTY

Apr 25, 2008

<u>MILEAGE</u>		X = Visible Remains or Marker						1 Chain = 66 Feet	
<u>FROM</u>	<u>IN</u>	L = Locations		<u>GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS</u>	<u>ROAD LOCATIONS</u>	<u>1847 REPORT & MISC DETAILS</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>SPANS / DIMENSIONS</u>	
<u>ST LINE</u>	<u>County</u>								
243	0			Vigo County Line					
		X	L-1	Big Slough Little Slough	Into Reservoir	Culvert No. 157 Culvert No. 158	Timber - Box Timber - Box	2 spans 1 span	11 Ft x 2 Ft 10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
			L-2			Eel River Feeder Eel River Dam 1st dam 180 Ft destroyed - flood Guard Lock on west end			5.5 Miles 264 Ft
			L-3	Birch Creek Pitt's Branch		Aqueduct Culvert on feeder 2 - Road Bridges on feeder	Open-Trunk Timber - Box	3 x 27 Ft 2 spans	81 Ft 10 Ft x 2 Ft
		X	L-4	Birch Creek		Birch Creek Reservoir Built in 1853 Feeder from Reservoir to Eel Feeder Culvert to discharge water Waste Weir 2 - Road Bridges on feeder Small Culvert on feeder		1000 acres 4 cast iron gates	4 Miles 300 Ft
				At Eel River Feeder		Waste Weir	Timber		50 ft
246	3	X	L-5			Lock No. 50 Lock No. 51 Culvert for Splunge Creek Feed	Wood - Crib Wood - Crib	8 ft Lift 8 ft Lift	
		X	L-6	Splunge Creek lower end of reservoir		Splunge Creek Reservoir Built in 1850 Road Bridge No. 112 Road Bridge No. 113		4 cast iron gates 4000 acres Old Hill / Rawleys Mill	40 Ft
				Watkins Creek Hooker's Mill At Kossuth At Kossuth		Culvert No. 159 Road Bridge No. 114 Road Bridge No. 115 Waste Weir - same as mouth of Eel River	Timber - Box	3 spans	12 Ft x 3 Ft
						Lock No. 52 "Kossuth" Culvert No. 160 Road Bridge No. 116 Waste Weir - same as mouth of Eel River	Wood - Crib Timber - Box	7.1 ft Lift 3 spans	10 Ft x 3 Ft
				Prairie Creek Just below Prairie Creek Road to New Brunswick Road to New Brunswick		Culvert No. 161 Lock No. 53 "Gallaghers" Road Bridge No. 117 just below lock Road Bridge No. 118 Lock No. 54 "Ragans"	Timber - Arch Wood - Crib		15 Ft Chord 6.6 ft Lift 7 Ft Lift
261	18			Greene County Line					
264	3			Greene Co to Owen Co. (see Greene Co.)					

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL



A Portion of Clay County, Indiana

Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Indiana.

Chicago, IL: Baskin, Forster & Co., 1876.

Canal points added by Bob Schmidt 2008.

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Note the location of Anguilla by the Eel River Feeder Dam. It is important to also note that the Cross-Cut from Terre Haute skirted the northern side of Splunge Creek Reservoir, then turned south on the eastern side and water from the Eel River Feeder entered the Cross-Cut. It then continued on to Worthington in Greene County. Excess water from the Eel River Feeder spilled over into the reservoir. The reservoir was used during the dry season to help feed the Cross-Cut toward Worthington. It never fed the Cross-Cut toward Terre Haute because it was lower than Lock 50.

CLAY COUNTY

Clay County was carved from parts of Owen, Putnam, Sullivan, and Vigo counties. It is 30 miles long and its average width is 12 miles. It is subdivided into 11 civil townships as follows: Brazil, Cass, Dick Johnson, Harrison, Jackson, Lewis, Perry, Posey, Sugar Ridge, Van Buren and Washington. The cities, towns and communities in Clay county include: Ashboro, Asherville, Barrick Corner, Bee Ridge, Benwood, Billtown, Bogle Corner, Bowling Green, Brazil, Brunswick, Buchanan Corner, Carbon, Cardonia, Center Point, Cherryvale, Clay City, Cloverland, Coalmont, Cory, Cottage Hill, Eel River, Harmony, Hickory Island, Hoffman Crossing, Hoosierville, Howesville, Knightsville, Lap Corner, Martz, Old Hill, Perth, Poland, Pontiac, Prairie City, Purdy Hill, Roadman Corner, Saline City, Shady Lane, Six Points, Staunton, Stearleyville, Turner and the historical communities of Prattsville P. O., Lodi, and Wickville. Some of their names reflect the products produced there.

Clay County is located in what the Indians termed their "Famous Hunting Ground" and was presumed to be the best land for hunting in the Indiana Territory being located on gently rolling land at 625 feet in elevation and above the Wabash Valley. In the 1809 Treaty of Fort Wayne the Delaware, Eel River and Miami Indians ceded the land to the United States in what was known as the Harrison Purchase.

BOWLING GREEN

Prior to its organization, David Thomas came to the area in 1818. He was soon followed by Samuel Rizley. Most of the early settlers cleared land along the Eel River in the central part of the county. A small community known as Bowling Green grew up near this river and was the only community in the county founded before 1830.

During pioneer times most of the settlers were farmers, who grew grains, flax and wool. The earliest industries were grist and saw mills, tanneries, distilleries, and spinning wheel manufacturers. County histories list Bowling Green as being the first in many of these industries including the first woolen mill, first brewery, and first steam flouring-mill. Later some county blacksmiths made bells to be put on the animals that grazed freely.

When the county was organized in 1825 it was named for Henry Clay, the Whig party statesman, and not the clay that has been of great importance to its economy. After a fine grade of the latter was discovered during the 19th century a number of brick factories and

potteries were built. Before pottery stores were opened the crocks, jugs, and other clay products were hauled by wagon around the country and sold to retail shops.

Clay County had abundant timber, which was turned into products. There was a chair maker, whose price was two bushels of corn per chair, and a split-bottom chair factory. Coopers made wash tubs, buckets and barrels for pork at \$1.00 per barrel and flour at twenty-five cents per barrel if purchased in quantities. Many of the barrels were hauled to Terre Haute to be sold. There were hoop poles makers, who received \$1 per hundred in Terre Haute and \$1.20 in New Orleans. Thousands of rough staves were also shipped to New Orleans. Shingles were made of fine poplar in factories on hand-powered machines and sold for \$1.25-\$1.50 per thousand in the 1860-70s. Grain cradles were manufactured.

Much of the timber was harvested leaving behind good grazing land. Dairy herds produced enough milk so that in 1879 two cheese factories were established.

Another resource of great importance to the county is coal. Tons of coal have been and continue to be strip-mined. The old mining operations left behind strip-pits that have been transformed into beautiful lakes for recreational purposes. Today mining laws require that the land be put back much as it was before the mining. This leaves behind a more rolling landscape than that of early strip-mining.

Today the main crops grown in the county are corn, hay and soybeans. Dairy herds, beef cattle and hogs are also raised. Manufactured products also add to the economy. These include door components, electrical cords, printed business forms and truck trailers.

At the time of Clay County's organization, commissioners were appointed to locate the county seat. They met at the home of David Thomas in May 1825. They chose a site in Bowling Green that was attractive with a lawn with walnut, poplar and sugar maple that had had been partially paid for by two Owen County citizens. They relinquished their claims, had their payment to the U. S. government refunded and were given certain lots in the town plat. Daniel Chance was appointed the county agent and given the authority to lay out the town and sell the lots. James Gallatley was hired to survey the plat and Philip Hedges cleared the town square. In 1827 Hedges was also contracted to build the first courthouse, which was located opposite the square, and jail, which was built on the square. The first courthouse was made of hewn logs and was a two-story building that covered about 20 x 30 feet. The courtroom was downstairs and county officers and ju-

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

rists could use the upstairs. The 20 x 20 feet log jail had a floor of heavy hewn logs that rested on sills and extended to the outer edge of the walls. The walls were two logs thick with upright poles between them to hold the prisoners. These two structures were used for the first 12 years.

Cross-Cut Canal

The Wabash & Erie Canal had to cross a second summit, the first being at Fort Wayne, Indiana. This second summit was between the Wabash and White rivers, Terre Haute to Worthington. Construction of this cross-cut was approved in 1836 as part of the Mammoth Internal Improvement Bill. It was to cross Clay County from the northwest through Perry, Lewis and Harrison townships to the southeast for nearly 20 miles. Of the land grants set aside by the federal government to be sold to fund the canal, 37,171 acres lay in Clay County. They put 25,080 of the acres for sale at \$2.50 an acre, 10,765 acres at \$2 an acre and 435 acres at \$1.25 an acre.

Plans for feeding the Cross-Cut at the summit level were as here detailed + 1849 modification:

1. Construct a dam across Eel River to supply water for the Cross-Cut both north and south of the summit with a second feeder at Rawley's Mill (Old Hill), which was never built. The Eel River Dam contract was let on November 17, 1836. Work began in 1837 and was completed two years later. It was 180 feet long with a stone abutment on the east end and a cut stone guard lock on the west end. Its height was 16 ½ feet from low water and was one of the most extensive structures on the whole line. In 1849 it was extended to 264 feet in length.
2. 1849 Construct a four-thousand-acre reservoir on Splunge Creek to replace the Rawley's Mill feeder by storing water during the wet season to be used on the southern portion of the Cross-Cut during dry periods. It was watered in 1850. Note that none of the water from Splunge Creek Reservoir flowed to the northern portion of the Cross-Cut because it was lower than the level of the canal above Lock 50. Water does not flow uphill.
3. They also dug the feeder canal in 1837 from the dam to the mainline of the canal and began construction of an aqueduct over Birch Creek, which was completed in 1838.

The Panic of 1837 delayed work to the south on the section between the Eel River Feeder and White River. Since Indiana was unable to meet the obligations it had incurred on its internal improvements, all work

stopped on the Cross-Cut and Wabash & Erie Canal in 1839.

In 1838 the public was excited by the construction of the Wabash & Erie Canal, its side-cuts and tributary feeders and talked about moving the county seat, but little was done. That year a contract was awarded to Dempsey Seybold, Sr. to erect a two-story, 40 x 50 feet brick courthouse and a county seminary. He fired the brick for the buildings in 1838 and completed the seminary that year. The new courthouse was completed in 1839 and occupied in 1840.

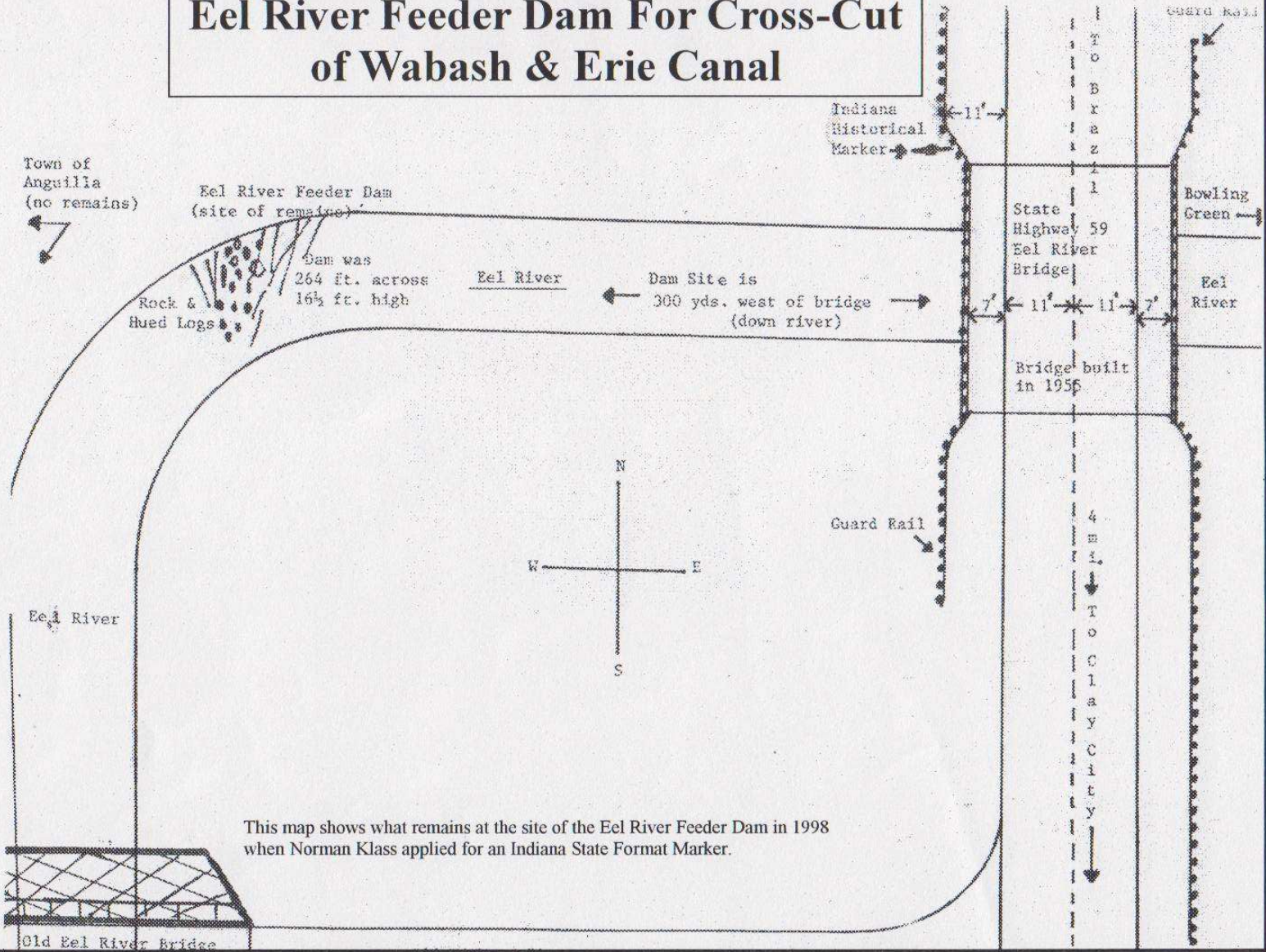
Although all work had ceased on the Wabash & Erie Canal in 1839, people wanted to see the canal completed. In 1845 they agitated for its construction being resumed. On January 19, 1846 the legislature passed an elaborate bill for continuing the project and the following January 1847 it was supplemented by another bill.

Construction began again in 1847, but it was not all new. The engineers found that much of their earlier work had fallen prey to decay and had to be reworked. Both the Eel River Dam and Birch Creek Aqueduct had to be rebuilt. A 2-mile long embankment across the valley north of the junction of the Eel river feeder and main canal to the foot of Old Hill was thrown up to create Splunge Creek Reservoir in 1849-50 and was filled with water in the fall of 1850. The 5.5-mile side-cut from Eel River Feeder Dam also fed the Splunge Creek Reservoir via a waste weir off the Cross-Cut canal.

On May 1, 1850, the first water was let into the section of the Cross-Cut from the Eel River Dam to Terre Haute. As soon as the water was deep enough to float boats, they operated between Bowling Green and Terre Haute. This was possible because the slackwater backed up by the feeder dam extended all the way to the Thomas Ferry. Boats entered the 12-mile slackwater at Bowling Green, then went down the feeder canal to the Cross-Cut and on to Terre Haute.

There was such enthusiasm over the watering of the Cross-Cut that on May 13, 1850, a group of prominent Terre Haute citizens and officers of the canal company put a small cannon aboard a boat at Prairie City and headed for Bowling Green, the head of slackwater navigation. They were a bit premature in that the water had not reached an appropriate depth and their craft became grounded. Several weeks later the "Oleus" made the trip carrying a cannon, ammunition and distinguished citizens. People came from all around to witness the event. Large ovations were given by those standing on the canal banks at the junction, the dam, Bellaire and Bowling Green. Cannon fire saluted them. Apparently

Eel River Feeder Dam For Cross-Cut of Wabash & Erie Canal



This map shows what remains at the site of the Eel River Feeder Dam in 1998 when Norman Klass applied for an Indiana State Format Marker.

Old Eel River Bridge

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

the citizens and visitors at Bowling Green really celebrated for the history books describe the event as a "drunken jollification."

As was common along the canal line, the opening of navigation greatly stimulated business and commerce at Bowling Green. The canal boat "Belle of Bowling Green" was built by Fuller, Melton & Kennedy in 1850 and that August carried grain and produce to Lafayette via the canal. Its commander was John W. Ecret. It then made trips all the way to Toledo and back bringing with it freight for local businesses. Fuller, Melton and Kennedy also built a warehouse, which later became a brewery, below the bridge. They also built a crude tow-boat to pull the canal boat to/from Bowling Green across the slackwater. They named it "Bull of the Woods." In 1851 Oliver Cromwell, Sr., organized a company to build a steam propelled boat to take the canal boats upstream from the dam, but delays caused the abandonment of the project.

On November 30, 1851, the second courthouse at Bowling Green burned down destroying all county records. At the time Riley Sexton was being held in the jail for the murder of Alfred Pitts. He had shot Pitts with a small brass-barreled pistol above the eye during an altercation while the men were constructing the Wabash & Erie Canal near the Brunswick-Howesville road. When the court house burned, no indictment against Sexton remained, he was released and escaped punishment. Once the courthouse was gone a fight began for relocating the county seat.

ANQUILLA

The relocation advocates wanted a more central point, west of the Eel River. John Osborn platted a town in 1838 hoping it become the county seat. He first called it Lower Bloomington and then changed the name to Jonesboro. According to Clay County histories in 1838 a lawyer named Samuel Howe Smidth purchased land at the Feeder Dam and called his proposed town of New Amsterdam with the idea that someday it would be the county seat. Its name was changed to Anquilla.

Anquilla is the Latin for eel, hence an appropriate name for a town. According to a newspaper article that appeared in the Clay City Independent of Friday, September 23, 1881, Vol. 1 No. 33, William J. Ball, the chief engineer of the canal, laid out a town on the west bank of the Eel River in July, 1838 on twenty acres of land that the canal company had purchased in anticipation of the development of a large flourishing commercial town. The plat for Anquilla was filed at Bowling Green on July 11, 1838 by C. C. Modesitt, Deputy Surveyor at Clay County, Indiana, certifying that it was a true plan so much of the town of Anquilla as lies on the

west side of Eel River situated in Clay County, Indiana, at the Feeder Dam 25 miles S.E. of Terre Haute and nine miles S. W. of Bowling Green the Base line bears 0°30' W and at right angles and parallel. The following day on July 12, 1838, he filed the plat for Upper Anguilla and certified that it was a true plat of Upper Anguilla situated on the west bank of Eel River at the Feeder Dam twenty five miles S. E. of Terre Haute and nine miles S. W. of Bowling Green the lines of said town runs parallel with those of the section. Judge Daniel Harris, grandfather of Daniel, Harris, of Middlebury, who is usually spoken of as the Father of Clay county, is credited with naming the town Anquilla.

The Wine brothers of Terre Haute built a large flouring mill and saw mill about 200 yards below the dam in 1842-43. It operated until 1850 when its foundation became instable through the encroachment of the water and the machinery had to be removed. They also were general merchandisers. Schinstein, a German miller, who was fondly known to his patrons as "Layover," ran the Anguilla Mill. It stood for just a few years before it toppled into the river and was washed away in the Great Flood of 1847.

A short time after this tragedy, a water-powered saw mill was built by Thomas Harris. It was operated by Jesse Al Pearce and then W. F. T. McKee. Alexander Brighton was employed at this mill in 1855 and was in charge of canal boats loaded with lumber bound for Terre Haute. Many board feet of lumber were shipped out from this mill via the canal to the east. It operated until the Civil War or when the canal was abandoned. A small grist mill was also operated nearby it.

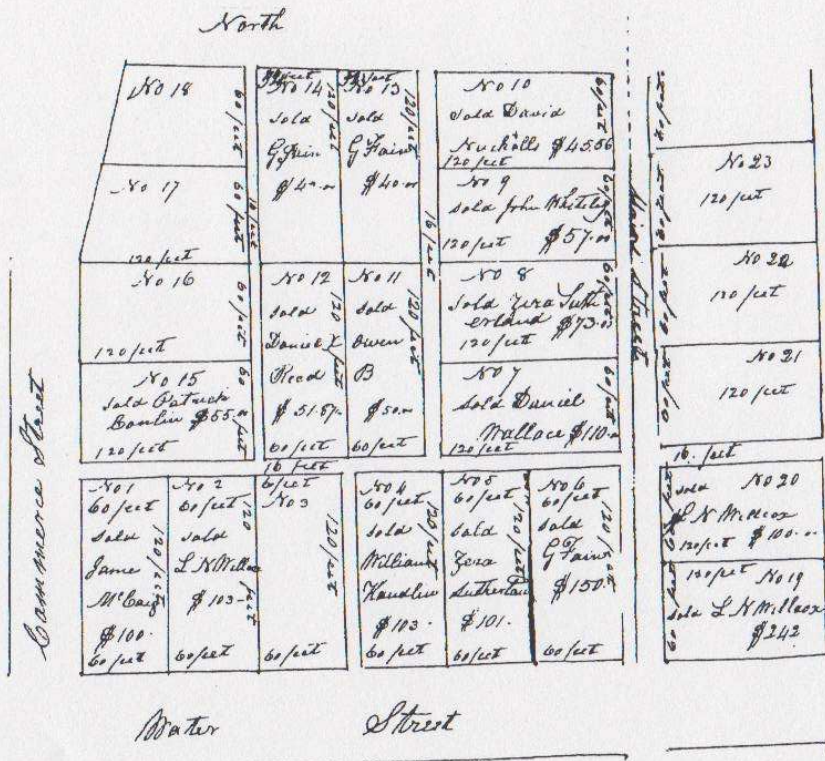
A ferry was operated at the Feeder Dam for a number of years. It started operation around the same time as the opening of the canal in 1859. The ferry had several proprietors starting with William F. T. McKee, then Levi Huffman and later Jesse A. Allee. It operated until the opening of the first bridge in 1879.

The original bridge was a wooden structure presumed to have been a covered bridge, for in July 1893 it was set on fire by an arsonist and was destroyed. A contract was let to build a new bridge on the abutment in September of 1894 for \$5,000. Petitions were filed with the commissioners to have the bridge moved downstream near the railroad crossing. The Clay County Court stayed the course leaving the bridge at its original location. The second bridge is the iron bridge that remains at this location today.

Anquilla had a post office that operated for 12-15 years. The postmaster was Thomas Harris, who engaged in merchandising and was the father of Daniel Harris mentioned earlier. He was succeeded by W. F. T.

Bawling Green July 12th 1838
 Anguilla

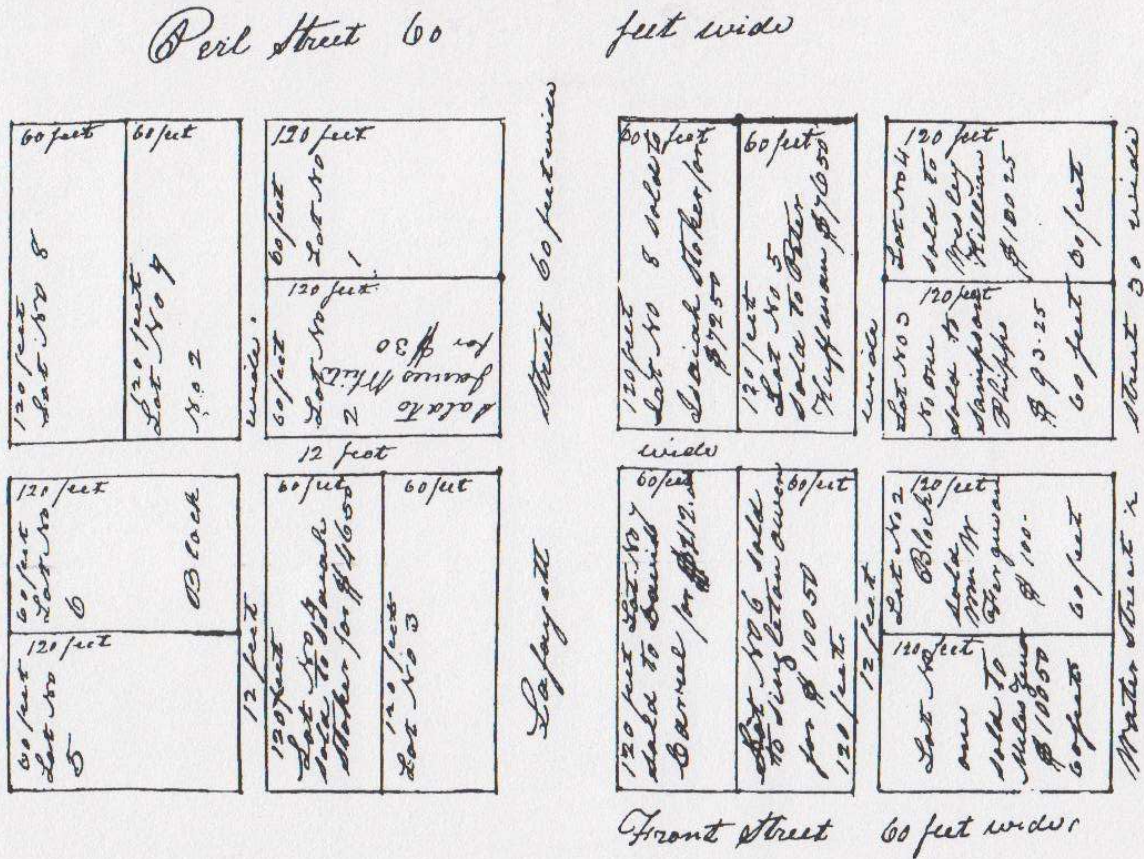
RECORD D PAGES 24 & 25
 BOWL ING GREEN JULY 12TH A.D. 1838
 ANGUILLA
 CLAY COUNTY, INDIANA



South

I do certify that this is a true plan of so much of the Town of Anguilla as lies on the West side of E. 1 River situated in Clay County Va at the feeder dam 25 miles S of Bawling Green the Base line bears S 50° 30' W and this at right angle and parallel Given from under my hand July 11th 1838
 L. C. Madsett
 Deputly Surveyor of Clay County

Bowling Green July 12th 1838
 Upper Anguilla in Clay County Indiana



RECORDED OF CLAY COUNTY, INDIANA
 HAS THESE RECORDS.

I do certify that the above is a true Plat of upper Anguilla situated on the west side of Bowling Green the lines of said town runs parallel with those of the section given from under my hand July 11th 1838

UPPER ANGUILLA

C. C. Madewitt Deputty Surveyor
 of Clay County, Ind.

Bank of Ed
 of Bowling

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

McKee. The building was later used as a stable. On the opposite side of the river from the flouring mill was the Buckeye grocery kept by Riley Luther. Sometime in the early 1900s a skating rink with a hardwood floor was built around a large tree on the south side of the road east of the old iron bridge. It was operating in 1937 and a local resident recalls that her parents did not allow her to frequent it as a girl because they did not feel that it was a proper place for their young daughter. A circle foundation still exists at this site today. In addition, a tavern once stood on the west side of the old iron bridge and the south side of the road.

In 1955 a new state highway bridge was built at the east end of the old feeder dam. The new road straightened the old route and bypassed the old iron bridge, which had served travelers for over fifty years.

Today the town of Anguilla no longer exists. The only remnants of this town are rumored to be a well, located in a field, and a recently found town plat. Part of the old feeder dam can be seen in the riverbed during low water. Jeff Koehler, CSI director from Center Point, believes that part of the levy system that stretches east along the Eel River was part of the elaborate feeder dam. Sometime during the early 1900s, the Eel River was straightened and bypassed the dam. Much of the old crib structure is still buried.

In 1851-52 there were two fatalities on the

Cross-Cut. A work hand on one of the canal boats drank too freely, became intoxicated at Kossuth, learned his boat had left without him and started to walk to his home in Newberry. He froze to death on the towpath and was found the next morning. After an inquest his body was buried on the west side of the towpath. Later his friends moved his body and buried it at Newberry.

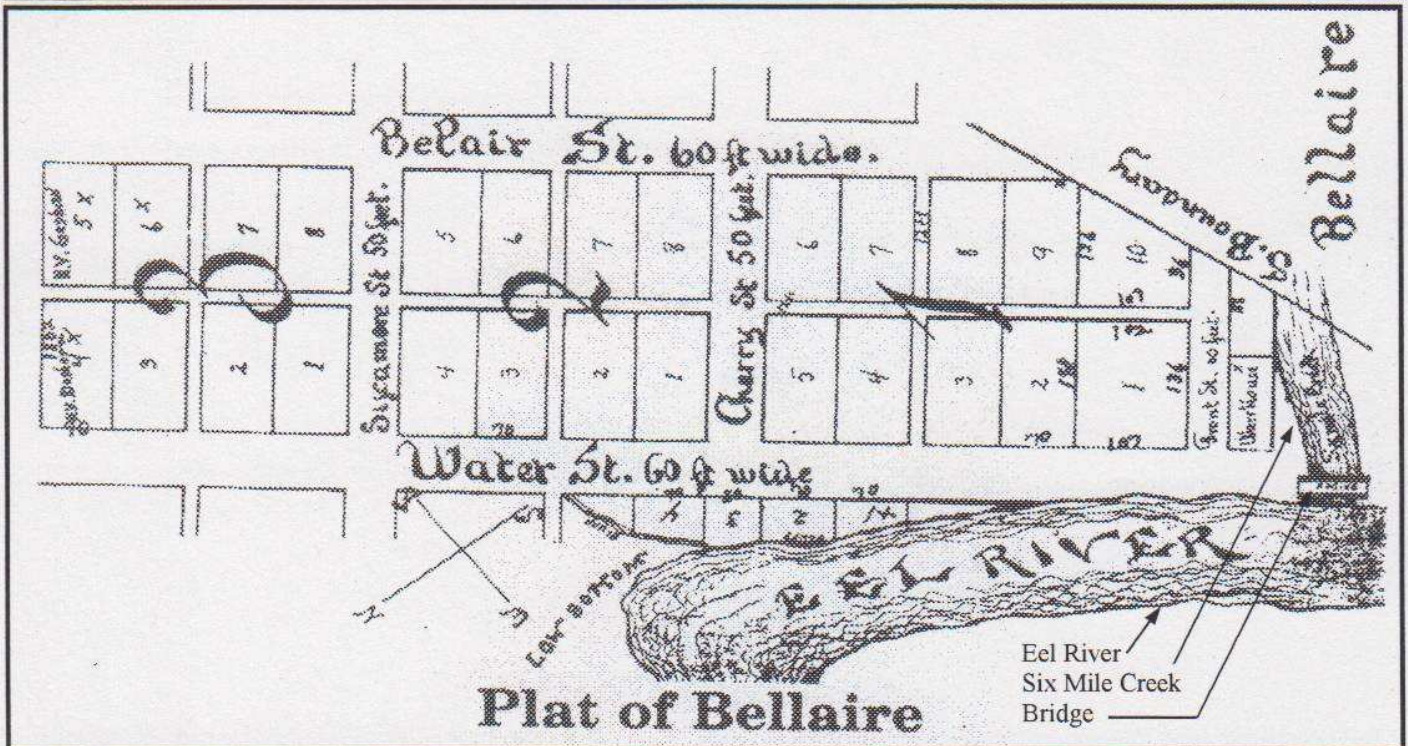
About the same time an unknown worker on the canal committed suicide. One night he hung himself from a small walnut tree in Lewis township alongside the canal.

BELLAIRE

In 1852 A. H. L. Baker, who had real estate at the bend of the river, three miles south of Bowling Green, built a large warehouse and a began construction of a large pretentious hotel. He laid out a town and named it Bellaire after the town he had once lived in in Harford county, Maryland. Bellaire became the chief contender for the new county seat.

Baker also owned and operated a canal boat named the "Eight O's" from Bellaire. Another canal boat doing business as Bellaire was the "Julia Dean" owned and operated by Mushett, who occasionally took his boat as far as Bowling Green. Lewis Row succeeded Baker in buying and shipping a great amount of grain via the canal. A second warehouse was built in Bellaire in

Bellaire, Indiana, which was built along the Eel River in Clay County, was prosperous due to the Cross-Cut Canal. When the canal ceased operation, the town gradually faded away placing it among a long list of canal ghost towns. Map furnished by Norman Klass



ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

1857 by Nicholas Goshorn & Son from which they shipped for several years and continued in merchandising until 1865. The town grew having a post office, several stores and shops for several years. The big floods of August 1875 and February 1883 washed away the low ground on which part of the town stood. It eventually fell to ruin. Today, if you drive up River Road, which was once Water Street, you see a house, a few cabins built in later years, and the cemetery.

Agitators for moving the seat of justice were able to get an act through the Indiana Legislature on March 14, 1853, which provided for commissioners to select a new county seat; however, Bowling Green was once again selected and the third courthouse was built.

Although the Cross-Cut had operated for several years with water from the Eel River Feeder Dam via the Eel River Feeder and with water from the Splunge Creek Reservoir, the engineers knew that there would not be enough water to maintain a 4 foot depth during the dry season south of Worthington. According to the 1837 engineer's report to the General Assembly, the canal from Worthington to Evansville had originally been planned to be part of the Central Canal and watered from the Central Canal's source. They had carefully calculated how much water was needed to feed this lower division and knew that the Eel River Feeder and Splunge Creek Reservoir would be insufficient. Once digging stopped on the Central Canal and the lower division was to be an extension of the Wabash & Erie Canal and fed through the Cross-Cut, provision for another reservoir had to be made.

William J. Ball, resident engineer was ordered by the Board in 1851 to find a favorable site for another reservoir. The following is an excerpt from the Annual Report Of The Resident Engineer to Jesse Lynch Williams, Esq., Chief Engineer on December 6, 1852 describing the choice of Birch Creek as the new reservoir site:

Under the order of the Board, passed at its meeting in December, 1851, extensive examinations were made last spring, with a view to the selection of the most favorable site for a reservoir to supply the deficiency of water on the summit level of the canal between Terre Haute and Eel River. Surveys were made in the valleys of Birch Creek, Turkey Creek, just above the feeder dam on Eel River, Six-mile Creek, about six miles above the feeder dam, and in the valley of Jordan Creek, about a mile above Bowling Green. More than fifty miles of line were run in making the examinations. The most eligible site for a reservoir was found on Birch Creek. On Turkey Creek a reservoir of sufficient capacity could be made, but the embankment would be very long and expensive, and a large amount of good land, now in cultivation, would be overflowed. On Six-mile Creek the capacity is quite too small, without raising the bank to a hazardous elevation, and considerable good land would be destroyed. On Jordan's Creek the

bank would be high and expensive, the area flooded small, a large portion of which is good land. Besides this, some valuable mill property would be destroyed. In addition to the above objections to all the sites of reservoirs examined above the Feeder Dam, the trouble and expense of regulating and keeping in order a reservoir, situated from six to ten miles from the Canal, would be very considerable, rendering it quite important to find a location somewhere below the feeder dam, which would be superintended by the Regular force without much additional expense. Fortunately the site in the valley of Birch Creek possesses all the essential requisites. The bank of this reservoir will be 2½ miles above the feeder dam on Eel River, and the same man that overlooks the feeder line and the Splunge Creek reservoir can pass by this every day going and returning, on his trip. The bank across the valley will be 59 chains long, and the greater portion of the shore of the reservoir will be formed by abrupt slopes, so that the surfaces exposed between high and low water mark will not be more than about three hundred acres, which it has been intended to clear. The entire area will be about one thousand acres. A portion of the area included in the reservoir is canal land, and a part of it yet belongs to the general government. The average area to be drawn upon may be assumed, with approximate accuracy, at 800 acres, and allowing two feet perpendicular depth of the surface for loss by evaporation and leakage, (which is an ample allowance) the Birch Creek reservoir would give supply of 1000 cubic feet per minute for 94 days, extending over that period of the year when there is deficiency. The reservoir and feeder, together with 250 acres of clearing, is estimated to cost \$24,358. This sum will be increased by the amount paid for land and damages.

Should it hereafter be deemed advisable to insure a more ample supply of water for the canal, the capacity of the Birch Creek reservoir may be greatly increased by a comparatively small additional expenditure in the cost of construction. No survey was made to determining accurately the area of country the drainage of which will be caught by the Birch Creek reservoir, as the flood discharging the surplus water at the west end of the bank, and conducting it into the creek again without damage to the farming lands.

Although the valley of Birch Creek presents, in my opinion, the most eligible site for a reservoir, it is proper for me to state, that when the surveys were making, the people in the neighborhood manifested decided opposition to it, declaring openly that if it were built the bank would not be permitted to stand. It was apprehended by the people of the adjacent country that their health would be greatly impaired by the construction of this reservoir, especially if the timber is not cleared off. From all the facts I have been able to gather, bearing upon the subject, (and they are numerous and very satisfactory,) I think this will not be the result. But in any event I know of no eligible plan by which the canal can be supplied with water without this reservoir. It is important that the land should be taken possession of immediately, and the work vigorously prosecuted, in order that the reservoir may be filled next winter, and the canal amply supplied with water in order to meet the demands of its increasing trade.

The contract was let for the 1,000 acre Birch Creek Reservoir on August 9, 1853 and it was con-

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

structed that year for \$30,000 in the central part of Clay County to supplement the water in the canal. A ½-mile-long embankment (levee) was built across the valley from east to west between elevated ground to collect water from Birch Creek. Some of the timber was let stand. The water was then fed from this reservoir via a 1 ¼-mile-long Feeder Canal into the Eel River Feeder Canal and from there into the Cross-Cut portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal. Any excess water from the Birch Creek/Eel River feeders that was not needed for the canal north to Terre Haute or south to Worthington spilled over into Splunge Creek Reservoir to be used during the dry season on the southern portion of the Cross-Cut.

The building of Birch Creek Reservoir was about the last straw for the opponents of the canal, who claimed that reservoirs bred disease. They cut a 100 foot gap in the reservoir bank in 1854. This released a thousand acres of water ten feet deep and dried up the canal for miles. The trustees said they would remove the timber.

In 1854, William K. Houston, a graduate of Wabash College and a resident lawyer at Bowling Green, took a contract to remove the timber from Birch creek reservoir and perhaps pacify the locals. Shortly after his marriage to Jane Miles, he had set aside the practice of law to build the Masonic hall, a large brick residence, a flouring mill and a new courthouse in Bowling Green. Since he had previous experience in fulfilling contracts, this one should not have been a problem. However, he fell short paying his laborers on the reservoir contract and his employees brought individual suits against him. Their claims ranged from \$3 to \$10 with some being less than the cost of the case. It was not uncommon for canal contractors to lose money on their contracts, but many of them paid off their employees from their own money and were not taken to court.

A contract was let for work on the Birch Creek embankment on May 25, 1855. Even with the work on the embankment and the removal of the timber, the Clay County Regulators were still not pacified. They set fire to the long wooden waste weir and the Eel River Feeder Dam.

Evansville newspaper articles reporting the incidents that occurred have been previously reported in this book. Evansville citizens supported the canal. They sent two detachments of enlisted single men, who were paid \$1.00 per day, to Clay County in 1855 with Colonel Dodd. One detachment protected Splunge Creek Reservoir while the other, composed of 50+ men, were sent to the Birch Creek Reservoir. The latter occupied 2 old canal boats and spent most of their time fishing, chasing ducks, playing cards and shooting at a mark with citizens of Clay County while waiting for a confron-

tion. After seeing county riflemen shoot a dime out of "a forked stick, at a distance of 20 steps, at every shot, the army of occupation had no anxiety to bring on an engagement."

News of the "depredations" spread beyond Indiana's boundaries. Papers in other states reported the events and maligned Hoosiers. The Editor of the Cincinnati, Ohio, *Commercial* commented as follows:

"We were yesterday surprised to receive a paper from Clay County, Ind. We did not presume that the people read the papers in that swampy, sloppy, soggy, sticky, stinking, stifling, stubborn, starving, subsidiary, slaving, slavish, swinish, sheepish, sorrowfully dark, desolate, direful, devilish, dim, doleful, downcast, dirty, despairing, deluded, degenerate, dismal, dreary, driveling, demoniac, dilapidated locality, where public works are destroyed and the officers, whose duty it is to defend the laws, with blacked faces, trample them under feet. On first opening this paper, we felt hopeful, thinking there would be light shining in the midst of darkness, but we discovered that the *Clay County Citizen* only makes darkness visible, as it is the organ of the 'canal cutters.'"

Needless to say this kind of publicity, along with those that claimed the canal bankrupted Indiana, did nothing to improve other states' opinions of Hoosiers. Clay County citizens were seen as backwoods, uneducated, rebel rousers with other Hoosiers not being much better.

SALINE CITY

A settlement grew up on the east side of Birch Creek Reservoir by the Feeder Canal, which was also at the junction of the main line of the Evansville & Indianapolis Railroad with the Brazil Branch. It was laid out in 1870 by Henry Jamison near where Colonel Dodd and his men had camped in the summer of 1855 defending Birch Creek Reservoir. A pioneer salt lick was located on the hillside just south of the town so he named it "Saline." He petitioned the September term of the Commissioners' Court in 1872 to change the name to "Saline City." That fall a post office was established with James Long as post master. It was made a money order office in 1892.

What later became the Saline City —Bowling Green road wound about trying to stay on the highest and safest ground crossing the marshy flats between the two towns. In early days it was known as "Snake road."

A section of track for the Terre Haute & South Eastern Railroad was laid atop of the Birch Creek Feeder at Saline City. This was a common practice since the towpath was already built up and fairly level.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

Hickory Island

When Splunge Creek Reservoir was built, an insular area of one or more acres was created near the northwestern edge within about a mile of the Vigo county line. It was named for the hickory timber growing on it. During the time the reservoir was maintained it was common for picnic parties from Bowling Green to go by canal boat on the Eel River slackwater and down the Eel River Feeder to the bank of Splunge Creek Reservoir and then by row boat to the island.

The Cross-Cut, its feeders and the slack water behind Eel River Dam furnished about 40 miles of water for canal boats. It was used for transportation for about 10 years. Loaded with salt, the first boat crossed the Cross-Cut from Terre Haute to Worthington in 1851. Augustus Stark, took his boat loaded with flour across the Cross-Cut from Worthington to Terre Haute bound for Lafayette and Toledo that spring.

In 1849, before the completion of the Cross-Cut, the first railroad survey was made in Clay County. Work was begun in 1850 and by the summer of 1851 the first construction trains carrying passengers rolled across Clay County. By May 10, 1852, the first passenger train round trip between Terre Haute and Indianapolis was made during daylight. Other railroads were soon built and drew traffic from the canal.

Splunge Creek Reservoir, also known as the Old Reservoir, provided recreation and a livelihood for many who lived nearby. The *Wabash Courier* of March 31, 1855 reports:

Wild ducks from the Reservoir are brought up to Terre Haute by the wagon load and find a ready sale at reasonable prices.

It was also good for fishing during and after the canal era. Clay County fishermen and some from neighboring counties set up camps along its borders and caught lots of fish. If, by chance they came when the fish weren't biting, they could purchased from people who maintained fisheries and placed the excess fish they caught during prime times in ponds. The proceeds from reservoir fishing over the years amounted to thousands of dollars. An owner of one of the fisheries is said to have made enough from one night's catch that he purchased an eighty-acre tract. Several fishery owners made enough to purchase valuable homesteads on the west side of the reservoir in Vigo County.

The reservoir continued to be watered until it was cut in late November/December 1866. This drained the old canal feeder to a low stage and everyone thought that most of the fish stocked in it had gone into

Eel River. When the river froze over in January 1867 with a sheet of ice so thick that sleighs and sleds could cross it, fish were discovered at a hole in the ice near a stump trying to get oxygen from the atmosphere and were very lethargic.

Residents around the reservoir took advantage of the situation, cut through the ice and removed the fish. Word spread like wildfire and within 48 hours there was a fishing frenzy with people coming from the neighboring counties of Vigo, Owen, Greene, Sullivan and Parke. At any one time 50-100 men chopped holes in the ice, used forks or rakes to bring the fish to the surface, or had on half sleeves made of oilcloth that had finger-stalls at the end to protect them from the freezing water when they took the fish out by hand. It is estimated that hundreds of tons of these fish were hauled away from the feeder in wagons, sleds, sleighs, buggies, etc. One history reports, "Passing along on the embankment, at a late hour of the day, from which there was an unobstructed view westward, the observer could count by the dozen piles of fish, heaped up in pyramid style, ready for the loading, and at the same time see a score of uplifted axe-blades glistening under the rays of the declining sun. A thaw on Friday, a week later, ended the biggest fishing event ever seen in Clay County.

Some of the fish were placed in fresh spring water or well water and resuscitated. Others were preserved in cold storage or dressed, placed in barrels and salted down for later use.

When the reservoir was drained it became farmland. The first year's crop was good and a rivalry sprang up between the farmers, who had purchased "Reservoir Land." However, future crops were often washed out by Splunge Creek overflowing or the Eel River backing up into the old reservoir. The most recent destruction to crops in Splunge Creek Reservoir occurred in May 2008.

In 1871, those in favor of a centralized county seat presented petitions to relocate to Ashboro, a town which C. W. Moss had laid out sometime between 1857-1860 with a 10-acre public square, which he donated to the county on which to build public buildings. The following summer of 1872 petitions were signed to relocate it in Brazil in the northern part of the county. At that time Brazil was much smaller than Bowling Green, but it was located on the National Road, which had been surveyed through the county in 1832 and made passable by 1835.

On September 9, 1871, permission was granted by the Indiana Legislature to move it to Brazil and the governor appointed three commissioners for the relocation. On January 25, 1877, the fourth Clay County

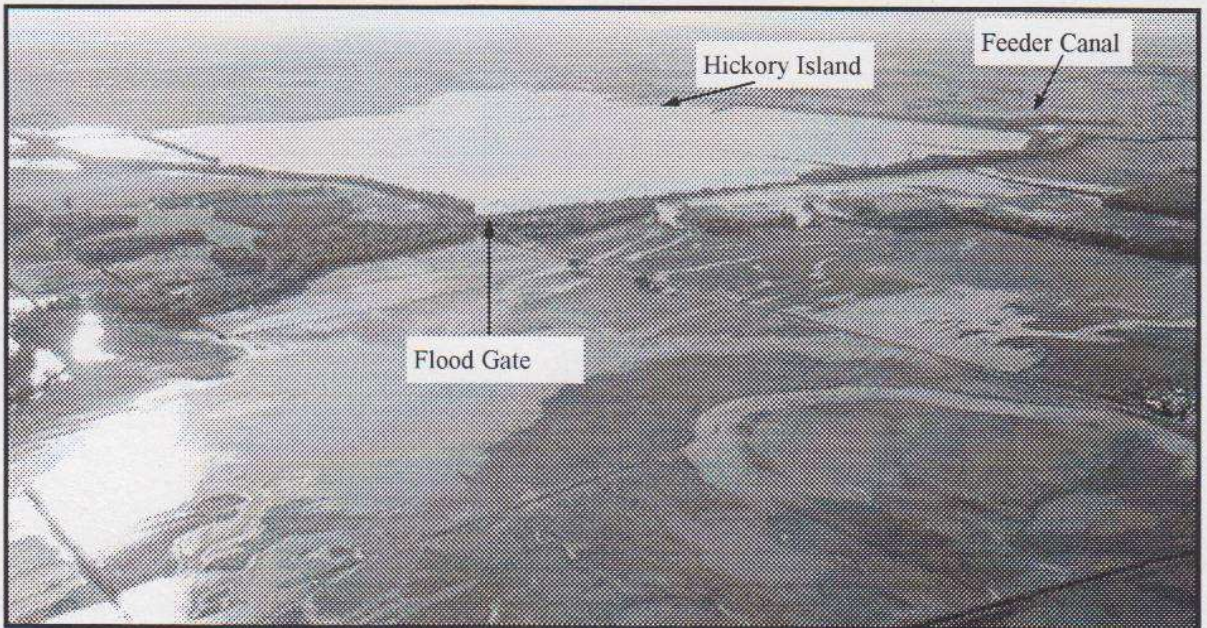
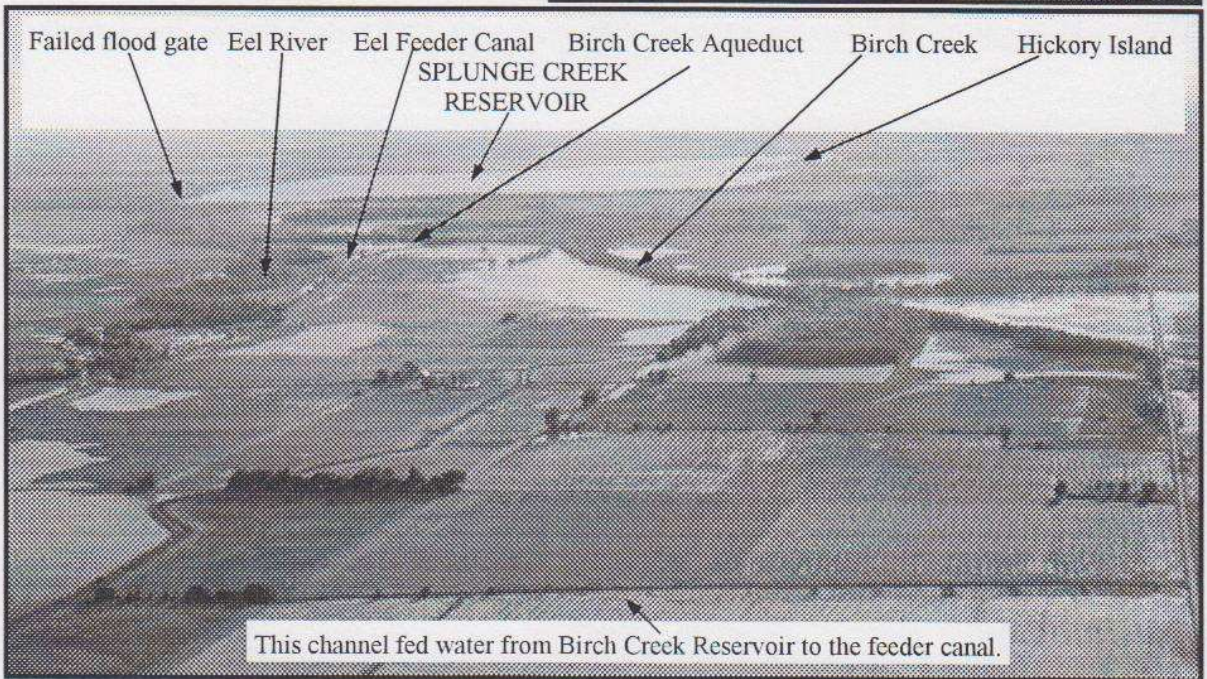
SPLUNGE CREEK RESERVOIR FLOODED

The extreme weather this spring took its toll on crops located within what was, during the canal era, Splunge Creek Reservoir. This 4,000 acre reservoir on the Cross-Cut portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal stored water to be fed into the canal during the dry season. After the canal era the reservoir was drained and a flood gate built under the stone arch. This gate recently failed letting flood waters from the Eel River flow into the reservoir and damage crops.

In these aerial photographs taken at 2500 feet from a plane piloted by Jeffrey Koehler, CSI director from Center Point, the outline of the reservoir and Hickory Island, extending from its northern shore, can be seen.

This is much as it would have appeared in the 1850s. Jeff says that about 2000-2500 acres or 4 square miles (about half of the original size) were underwater when his cousin took the photographs.

The flood gate at the top right was photographed in May 2008 shortly before the flooding occurred by Bob Schmidt, CSI president from Ft. Wayne, in preparation for CSI's fall tour of the Cross-Cut Canal. Here can be seen canal era stones and more modern concrete.



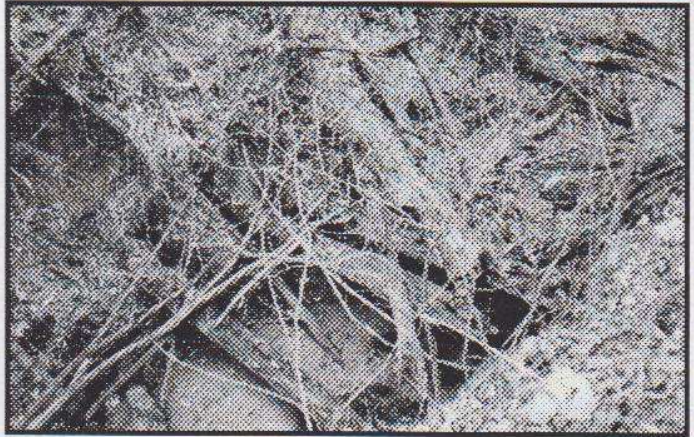
ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

Courthouse was completed in Brazil. It was a brick structure that cost \$13,000. The following year a \$7,900 jail was erected.

Brazil continues to be Clay County's seat of justice. The fifth and current courthouse was completed in 1914.

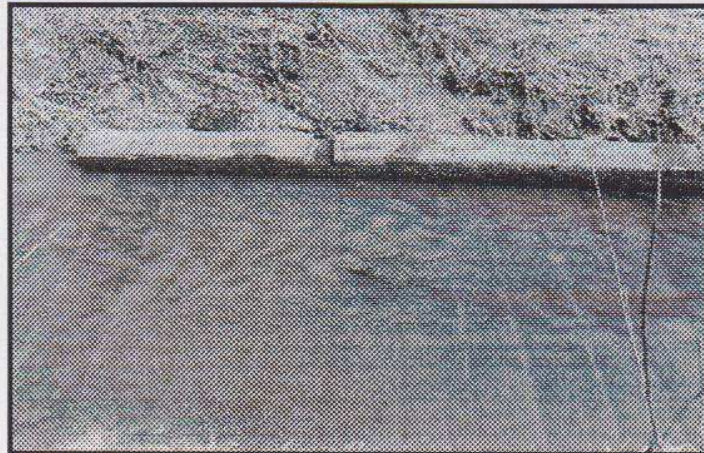
REMAINING CROSS-CUT PRISM AND STRUCTURES IN CLAY COUNTY

Culvert 157 on Big Slough, a wooden box culvert that was uncovered by a farmer and its remains visible at low water on the 1994 CSI tour. The engineer's report of 1853 describes it as "Large branch running into reservoir; length 116 feet; two spaces 11 by 2 feet clear; top of culvert 8.3 feet B.



Top: Stan Schmitt views foundation timber of Lock 50 that have been undercut by water in the 1980s.

Bottom: A greater extent of deterioration can be seen in this picture of Lock 50 taken in the 2000s. When timbers are exposed to the elements they deteriorate rapidly. When they are



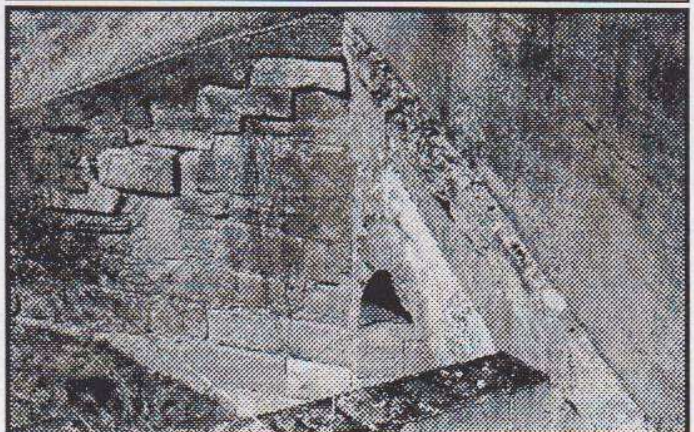
Top: Culvert 157's northeastern and middle walls sat atop foundation timbers. Water flows over both chambers.

Bottom: Notches are seen on this northeastern wall sitting atop the foundation timbers of Culvert 157. Photos by Bob Schmidt

Lock 50 by Splunge Creek Reservoir and a short distance below the mouth of the Eel River feeder had a lift of 8 feet and was built of timber on the crib plan. A tow path bridge was built over the lower end of the lock. Today all that remains are the foundation timbers which have been undercut by water flowing beneath them.

Flood Gate of Splunge Creek Reservoir at Old Hill failed in 2008 flood. At the time of publication we do not know how much of it remains. It is thought to have been reconstructed with stone from one of the cut stone locks. Even later concrete was used to shore it up.

This picture of the Splunge Creek Flood Gate shows the cut stone blocks. P-Bob Schmidt



ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

CROSS-CUT MARKERS

In 1999, through the efforts of Norman Klass of Clay City, Indiana State Format Markers for the Cross-Cut Canal and the Eel River Feeder Dam were dedicated and erected in Clay county. The Canal Society of Indiana helped fund the marker at the feeder dam. The markers read as follows:

CROSSCUT CANAL
EEL RIVER FEEDER DAM
Eel River Feeder Dam, 180 feet long
And 16.5 feet high, was completed
300 yards downriver from here 1839.

It was constructed to carry
enough water from the river to
Enable navigation of boats on the
Proposed Crosscut Canal, included
in Indiana Internal Improvement
Act 1836. State halted
Construction of canal 1839.
(Continued on other side)

CROSSCUT CANAL
EEL RIVER FEEDER DAM
(Continued from other side)
Crosscut Canal construction resumed
1847: in service 1850-1861
From Terre Haute on Wabash River
To Worthington on West Fork White
River. Feeder Dam, deteriorated
with neglect, repaired and extended
To 264 feet long by 1850. Part of
Wabash and Erie Canal, America's
Longest at approximately 460 miles;
Linked Lake Erie at Toledo, Ohio with
Ohio River at Evansville 1853.
To 264 feet long by 1850. Part of
Wabash and Erie Canal, America's
Longest at approximately 460 miles;
Linked Lake Erie at Toledo, Ohio with
Ohio River at Evansville 1853.



CROSSCUT CANAL
Located here was part of Crosscut
Canal. In service circa 1850-1861
From Terre Haute on Wabash river
To Worthington on West Fork
White River: sale of land in Clay
County helped finance. Part of
Wabash and Erie Canal. America's
longest, linked Lake Erie at Toledo, Ohio,
with Ohio River at Evansville 1853,
Included in Indiana Internal
Improvement Act 1836.



What is left of the Cross-Cut by the above marker. Ps-B. Schmidt

No. 13 of 19 Counties

WABASH & ERIE CANAL BY INDIANA COUNTY

04/25/08

GREENE COUNTY

ESTABLISHED : Feb 5, 1821
 NAMED FOR: Nathaniel Greene - Revolutionary War general
 SIZE : 546 sq miles
 CANAL TOWNS : Johnstown, Worthington, Newberry

COUNTY SEAT - BLOOMFIELD

ESTABLISHED : Apr 22, 1824
 FOUNDERS : Peter VanSlyke donated land named by Hollet B. Dean
 NAMED FOR : town in New York
 NICKNAME :
 W&E reached here in area 1850

BLOOMFIELD	Population
1830	
1840	
1860	
1870	
2000	2542

No. 14 of 19 Counties

OWEN COUNTY

ESTABLISHED : Jan 1, 1819
 NAMED FOR: Abraham Owen killed at Tippecanoe battle
 Just touched by W&E Canal at Johnstown

COUNTY SEAT - SPENCER

ESTABLISHED : 1820
 FOUNDERS :
 NAMED FOR : Captain Spier Spence -killed at Tippecanoe battle

Population
2006
2522

SUMMARY OF STRUCTURES IN GREENE COUNTY

	<u>LIFT</u>	<u>QTY</u>	<u>NUMBERS</u>	<u>LENGTH OF CANAL IN COUNTY</u>
Stone Locks	16.0	2	No. 58 & 59	3 Clay Co. - Owen Co.
Timber Locks	22.0	3	No. 55-57	25 Owen co. - Daviess Co.
County Totals	<u>38.0</u>	<u>5</u>		
Guard Locks		2		<u>28</u> Miles
Other Locks			1 River Lock	
Aqueduct - Open				
Aqueduct - Covered				
Stone Arches				
Timber Arches		3	No. 162, 166&167	
Box Culverts		3	No. 163-165	
Feeders to main Canal				
Slackwater Crossings		1		
Dams		2		
Road Bridges		12	No. 119-130	
Waste Weir		1		
Flood Gates		2		
Towpath Bridges		3		
<u>CANAL TOWNSHIPS</u>		<u>TOWNS</u>		<u>WATERWAYS</u>
Smith				Lagoon Creek
Jefferson		Johnstown & Worthington		Eel River
Fairplay				Seamon's Creek
Washington				Lattas Creek
Cass		Newberry		White River
				Doan's Creek
				Woodhouse Branch
				Slinkard's (First) Creek

**GREENE COUNTY
 CANAL STRUCTURES**

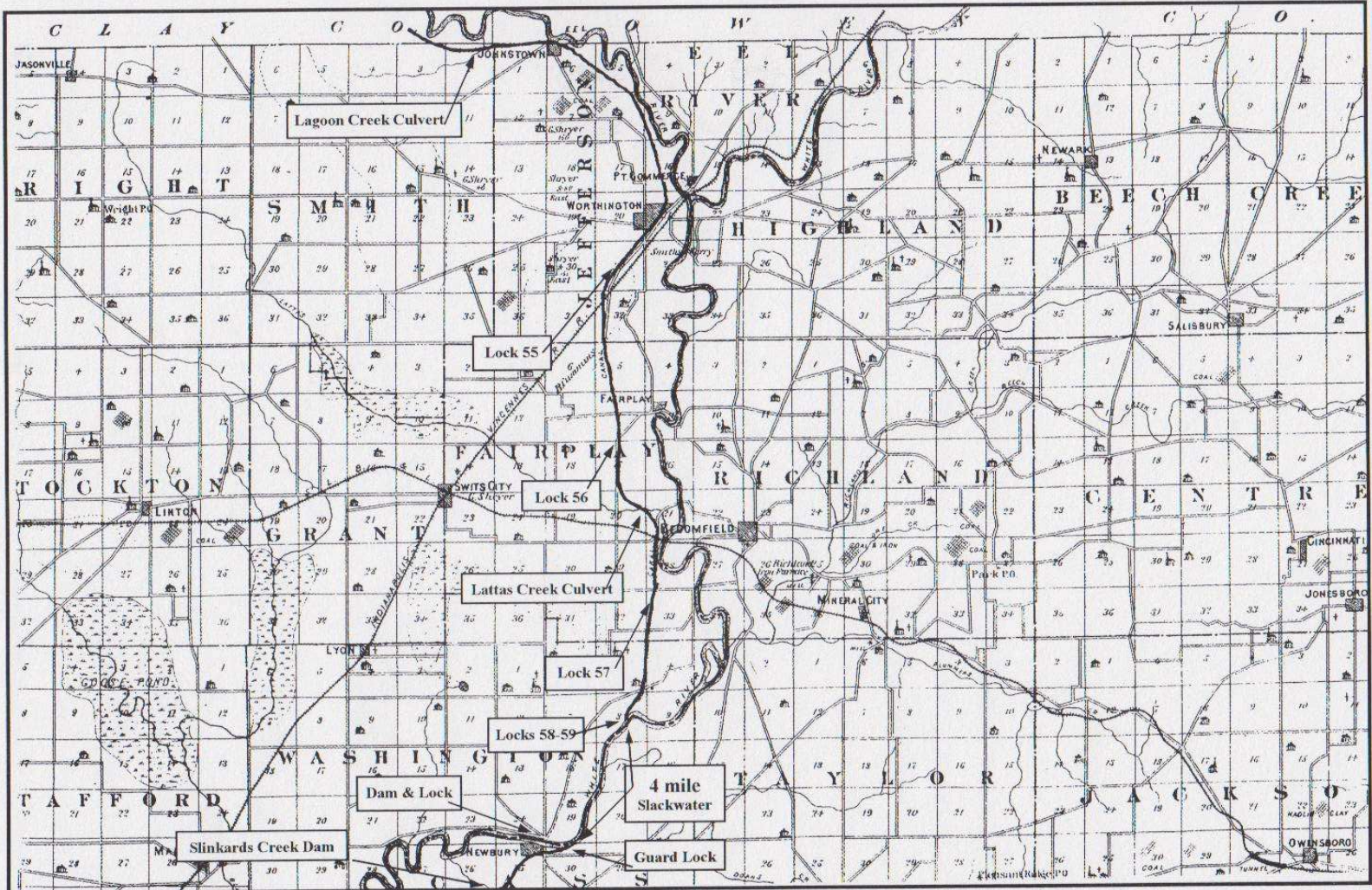
Official distances in bold

DETAILS OF WABASH & ERIE CANAL IN GREENE COUNTY

04/25/08

<u>MILEAGE</u>		X = Visible Remains or Marker L = Locations	<u>GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS</u>	<u>ROAD LOCATIONS</u>	<u>1847 REPORT & MISC DETAILS</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>SPANS / DIMENSIONS</u>	
<u>FROM</u>	<u>IN</u>							
261	0		Greene/ Clay County Line					
		L-1	Lagoon Creek		Culvert No. 162	Timber - Arch		20 Ft Chord
			1/4 mile above Hubble's Mill		Culvert No. 163	Timber - Box	1 span	10 Ft x 1.5 Ft
			3 miles in Greene Co. At Hubble's Mill		Road Bridge No.119			
264	0		Owen County line		Johnstown			
			Flood gate lays flat in canal		Guard gates on canal			
			2 1/2 miles above Worthington		Waste Weir			
		3	Seaman's (Lemon) Creek		Culvert No. 164	Timber - Box	3 spans	12 Ft x 3 Ft
			Above West Point Commerce		Culvert No. 165	Timber - Box	1 span	3 Ft x 1.5 Ft
			Road to Point Commerce		Road Bridge No.120			
268	4		Worthington		Road Bridge No.121			
			Road to Louisville - 1 1/2 miles		Road Bridge No.122			
		5.5	L-2	1 1/2 miles from Worthington	Lock No. 55	Wood - Crib	8 ft Lift	
		9		Fairport Road	Road Bridge No.123			
			L-3	1/2 mile from Fairplay Road	Lock No. 56	Wood - Crib	7 ft Lift	
		11	X L-4	Lattas Creek	Culvert No. 166	Timber - Arch		26 Ft Chord
				Road Fairplay to Newberry	Road Bridge No.124			
				Prevent flooding from White River	Guard gate on canal			
276	12		Road to Bloomfield		Road Bridge No.125			
			Road to Bradford's Ferry		Road Bridge No.126			
			L-5		Lock No. 57	Wood - Crib	7 ft Lift	
		14		Road to Bradford's Ferry	Road Bridge No.127			
					Culvert No. 167	Timber - Arch		16 Ft Chord
		16		Road to Bloomfield	Road Bridge No.128			
			X L-6		Lock No. 58	Combined	8 ft Lift	
			X		Lock No. 59	Combined	8 ft Lift	
281	17		White River		Slackwater to Newberry Dam			4 miles
				Crossing White River	Towpath Bridge			
			Doan's Creek	South side of White River	Towpath Bridge			120 Ft long
			Woodhouse Branch	1/2 mile above dam	Towpath Bridge			50 Ft long
285	21	X	L-7	Newberry	Newberry Dam		12 Ft High	444.4 Ft
				For flat boats	River Lock in dam	Wood - Crib	21 Ft wide	105 Ft long
			L-8	Reenter the main canal	Guard Lock			
				Just below guard lock	Road Bridge No.129			
					at Newberry			
				Slackwater across Slinkard's Creek				100 Ft long
					Towpath Bridge		1-span 60 Ft / 2 spans- 40 Ft	100 Ft long
			L-9	Slinkard's (First) Creek	Slinkard Dam		10 Ft High	100 Ft long
				Leave Slackwater	1 1/2 miles below Newberry			
				1 mile below Slinkard's Creek	Guard Lock			
					Road Bridge No.130			
287	25		Daviess County Line					

1 Chain = 66 Feet



A Portion of Greene County, Indiana

Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Indiana. Chicago, IL: Baskin, Forster & Co., 1876.

Canal points added by Bob Schmidt 2008.

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GREENE COUNTY

Greene County contains 546 square miles of land that lies seventy-five miles southwest of Indianapolis. It is located in the southwestern part of Indiana and is the second county from the state's western border. The county is almost divided equally by the west branch of White River. Other major streams are the Eel River, Beech, Black, Indian, Plummer and Richland Creeks.

The county's hilly land lies to the east of the White River and has many rock bluffs. This land was heavily timbered with oak, poplar, walnut, sugar-tree, sycamore, ash, beech, cherry, locust, gum and hickory when the settlers arrived. Most of this land has coal and iron deposits in abundance that are of excellent quality. It has the richest iron ore beds of any county in the state. They are from six to thirty feet thick. At some places huge masses of ore weighing several tons are on the surface heaved there by some natural force. The strata of block coal are from four to eight feet thick. Mining is a large industry. As early as 1914 over 2.4 million tons were mined annually, which was about the same mined each year from 1950-1970. It is estimated that the county still has 420 million tons of recoverable resources available. Limestone is abundant. Thus we see that the major ingredients in the production of iron (iron ore, coal or timber for charcoal, and limestone) were readily accessible to the early settlers.

Level prairie land lies to the east of White River. The prairies are Half-Moon, Nine-Mile, Scaffold and Four-Mile. Some of this prairie land is low and wet, which makes it more suitable for pastures than for the cultivation of grain. The soil quality varies greatly from rich alluvial to stony clay. Some timber is found on sandy ridges called barrens. This timber is small hickory, short and rough black oak, white oak and some walnut. Good quality coal is in abundance. The county has never really developed or used its natural resources to their potential.

The towns of the county in 1875 included Bloomfield, Dresden, Fairplay, Jasonville, Johnstown, Jonesboro, Linton, Lyons Station, Marco, Newberry, Newark, Owensburg, Point Commerce, Scotland, Solsberry and Worthington. Today Linton is the largest town and some others are ghost towns. Most of Greene County's towns are not written up in detail in this tour book for they were not along the Cross-Cut Canal. The county has seven incorporated towns and 40 communities, only a few other counties can claim so many settlements. The population was 32,692 in 2007.

The geography of an area greatly determined its pattern of settlement. This was especially true for

Greene County. The Eel River and the west fork of the White River (Wapehani meaning "white" or "clear water") join at what was to later become Worthington and run through the county. Settlements grew along this early river transportation route.

Native Americans

Native Americans wandered along these rivers locating for short periods of time where they found a plentiful supply of game. One of their villages was at today's Worthington and another was at Point Commerce across the Eel River. A Piankeshaw village of several hundred wigwams sat on the site that was later to become Fairplay. The Piankeshaws were a branch of the Miamis. Shawnee also came to the area, there being no white settlers prior to 1810. When the white settlers came they traded with the Native Americans.

Stories have been handed down about that time. One tells about a Miamis village across the White River on the Dixon farm. There the Native Americans constructed sweat houses to cleanse the skin and tone up the systems of the braves. A sweat house was started by piling up stones, building a fire, and building a wigwam over the hot stones. The wigwam was then entered by the naked braves who threw water on the hot stones and danced around them sweating profusely much like today's sauna. Then they entered an adjacent wigwam, wiped dry and put on warm buckskins.

Another story tells of the part Greene County played in the conflict between the settlers and Native Americans. This was around 1811, the time of the Battle of Tippecanoe when Gen. Wm. Henry Harrison battled the Native Americans near Lafayette, IN. At that time the "natives were restless" and there were uprisings in southern Indiana and Kentucky. They wanted to protect their land and keep the white settlers out.

Harrison had marched his troops along the Wabash River from Vincennes north to Ft. Harrison at Terre Haute. There he was to be met by General Hopkins and a company of soldiers from Kentucky and then continue on toward Lafayette. The Kentucky soldiers set up camp for the night at Point Commerce in Greene County on their way to Terre Haute. Being unsure of the Native Americans who lived in a village where Worthington now stands, the soldiers stationed guards around their camp at what were thought to be points of danger. One of these stations was at the Old Indian Ford across the Eel River. John Shelton was to man the station on the hillside above the ford. He and the other guards were ordered not to shoot unless they were firing at an approaching Native American.

While John was keeping his watch, a deer

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passed by. The men were very hungry from their long trek. John just couldn't pass up the chance to secure some food. He fired and killed the deer. He ran to where the deer had fallen in the hollow and covered it with brush.

Meanwhile, an officer, who had heard the shot, came running with a group of soldiers to defend the camp from the Native Americans. John denied firing a shot or of seeing any enemies. The other soldiers hadn't heard the shot so they returned to camp. After things quieted down, John slipped back down the hollow, dressed the deer and later took it to camp where the hungry soldiers and the general had a feast with no questions asked.

Years later John confessed to General Hopkins about firing the shot. The general replied that he was glad he didn't find out that night that John had violated his order, for he would have had to have John shot at Point Commerce.

Following the defeat of the Native Americans at the Battle of Tippecanoe, Gen. Harrison signed many treaties with them and purchased their lands. White settlers soon entered the county with the first white settlement being established in 1813.

It was probably the Piankeshaws that visited the area in 1819. A group of about 300 on horseback passed along the Old Indian Trail. They crossed the Eel River about a quarter of a mile north of the present day bridge at what was called the Old Indian Ford. This was just outside of present day Worthington.

A few days later on September 30, 1819, more Native Americans floated down the White River in canoes. They set up camp at the mouth of Eel River. The exact date is remembered for on that Sunday John Fires and Martha Craig were married. Everyone in the town had gathered for the wedding celebration. They were scared of being massacred when they saw the canoes approaching. The wedding party, accompanied by others, walked down to the river to speak with the Native Americans.

A young newly married brave was the chief of the group. He was very pleased with 15 year old Martha Craig Fires' appearance. She had light skin and blonde hair. He offered to trade his new bride for Martha. This made Martha indignant. Her new husband refused to trade brides. Luckily the chief was appeased when his demands for a blanket and a bear skin were met. Why either of these two native groups were on the move at that time is unknown.

In 1820, the Native Americans were being re-

moved to live on reservations in the west. While awaiting their removal from the area, they gathered west of Bloomfield on the White River's west bank and held ceremonies. These ceremonies were sometimes very solemn and quiet. But the white settlers became fearful of attack and fled to safety when other ceremonies became wild. No attack ever occurred.

These people left behind their marks on Greene County. They traversed the land along what is referred to as the "old Indian trail." They also built several mounds in the county, most of which have been excavated. The mound located where Worthington sprang up was a determining factor in the shape of Worthington - one on road that goes past the cemetery and another on the road that goes out to the gravel pit.

Greene County Organized

White settlement of the area began before Greene County was organized. In 1813 some settlers came to what was to become Point Commerce, a settlement that flourished for over fifty years. Shortly thereafter Fairplay sprang up on the west side of the White River just five miles south of Point Commerce.

Although the fourth largest county in area in Indiana today it was at one time a part of Knox County, which had Vincennes as its county seat. People wishing to purchase land or conduct business had to travel to Vincennes (settled in 1702). During the early settlement this seemed far away and difficult to reach.

Later when Sullivan County was formed, the Greene County area became a part of Sullivan County. Greene County eventually broke away when it had enough settlers to form a governing body. It was organized in 1821, a short five years after Indiana entered statehood, and held its first election for county officials in the home of Thomas Bradford. It was named after a Revolutionary War general, Nathaniel Greene.

The county officials wanted the first county seat to be located at what they thought was a prime spot. This was at the geographical center of the county, was on the east bank of the White River, and was directly opposite the settlement of Fairplay. It was to be called Burlington. They had a city laid out in what was a woods and a courthouse built costing \$250 on the land set aside for the town square. A road running east to west and a road running north to south were surveyed. This town was to be easily accessible with a ferry operating across the river to the homes and the few stores in Fairplay. Then they dug a well. No water was available. The best laid plans soon came to a halt. It appears that no town was ever established there.

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The officials then decided to move the county seat. The citizens of Fairplay thought that it would be chosen since it was nearby, was close to the county's geographical center, had a town already established and had a good water supply. But the officials were offered free land for a public square in Bloomfield. They decided to locate there. Bloomfield has continued as the county seat from 1823 to present.

Fairplay experienced a severe cholera epidemic that almost eliminated it at the time. It no longer exists.

The third settlement in the county was at Newberry in 1822 when John Ritter opened his store. The fourth was Bloomfield, the fifth was Scotland in 1834 and the sixth was New Jerusalem later to become Linton, the largest town in Greene County today.

The Canal

In the *Annual Report of the Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal*, to the General Assembly of the State of Indiana that was submitted by Charles Butler, Thomas Blake and A.[Austin] M. Puett on December 9th, 1848, the planned completion of this division of the canal was given as follows:

On the twenty-fourth day of May last, another division of the Canal, extending from Terre Haute to Point Commerce, a distance of forty-two and a half miles [42 miles and 7 chains], was put under contract at prices near the estimates, and the work has been pushed forward with great vigor, as is manifest in the heavy disbursements already made upon it in payments to contractors. This division, it is believed, will be ready for navigation some time next fall, and in anticipation of it, and to open the line further south, as rapidly as practicable, another letting was had at Point Commerce on the 15th of November last for the construction of the division of the Canal from that place to Newberry, near the south line of Green[e] county, a distance of seventeen miles. At this terminus a dam is to be erected across the west fork of White river, 425 feet long and 11 feet high, with a river lock so constructed as to avoid any impediment to the river trade. The dam is made to answer both for a feeder and a cross for the Canal to the eastern side of the river.

In the preliminary survey of the Canal route, made in 1845, the line was run about three-fourths of a mile west of the village of Point Commerce, and a side cut was surveyed and reported, extending from the main line to the bank of Eel River, opposite the village. Before making the final location of the work, a petition was received from the citizens of Point Commerce, praying a change of plan at this point, by which the side cut would be dispensed with, and the main line brought a little nearer to the town. Finding from the surveys and report of the locating engineer, that the change of plan devised would not increase the cost, nor otherwise affect unfavorably the public interest, while it would better subserve the wants of this village, whose accommodation was manifestly the only object of the

construction of this side cut, the Trustees ordered the Canal to be located in accordance with the petition.

The repairs on the southern end of the Canal, between Pigeon Dam and Evansville, embraced in the plan of the Trustees, to be made this year, have been made.

There has been paid for construction, during the year ending the first day of December, instant, the sum of \$341,953.16, and it is expected that throughout the present winter, as it was the last, the force now employed upon the canal work will be kept up. The present force employed upon the Canal is equal to 1780 men. There are 96 miles of the main line under contract, from Coal Creek to Newberry, besides the work at Patoka Summit. There remains 72 miles of the line, from Newberry to Pigeon Dam, to be put under contract to complete the entire line.

In the *Report of the Resident Engineer of the Wabash and Erie Canal* of November 30, 1848 by William Ball to Jesse Lynch Williams, the canal in Greene County was planned.

In March last a locating party was organized, and the line from Terre Haute to Point Commerce, a distance of 42 miles and seven chains, and also including the Eel river feeder and dam, was prepared for letting the 24th of May, at which time the contracts were all disposed of. This portion of the line is estimated to cost \$273,631.46, and is now under contract, after several re-lettings, to be constructed for the sum of \$275,319.39. The estimate on this division, made the 10th of November last, amounted to \$77,187.00, leaving work yet to be done to the value of \$198,132.39. The work on this portion of the line, has generally been prosecuted with energy by the contractors, and should the ensuing Winter not be very unfavorable, the entire line to Point Commerce may be completed by the 1st of November next. There are now employed 1,250 laborers, and an effective force, equal to 1,780 men on the entire line from Coal Creek to Point Commerce. The force South of Terre Haute is 850 men, and an effective force equal to 1,215 men.

This division of work embraces 14 locks, nine on the North side of the Summit, having an aggregate lift to 78 feet, and five on the South side with a total lift of 37 feet; the extension of the Eel river feeder dam 82 feet, and the raising and repairing the old dam, the entire length of which will be 264 feet, and height 16½ feet above low water; a reservoir bank containing 97,000 cubic yards of embankment with a protection wall of two inch plank in its centre the whole length; three arched culverts; two small aqueducts; 14 rectangular submerged culverts, and 17 road bridges.

In August last, a locating party was put in the field, with Mr. William P. Whittle at its head, to re-locate the line from Point Commerce to Newberry (and make some surveys and examinations at, and in the vicinity of, the Patoka Summit.) The line adopted follows down the East side of the prairie, from Point Commerce to Latta's Creek, a distance of six and one-half miles, thence, after crossing that stream is traced along the foot of the

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hill bounding the river bottom, except in a few instances, where too much distance would be lost by following its sinuosities, down to a point where the river comes into the foot of the bluff, thirteen miles below Point Commerce. Here two locks are introduced, and the river crossed in the pool of the Newberry dam. After crossing the river, the pool of the dam will be the Canal, and the river bank the tow path down to Newberry, a distance of four miles. Upon this portion of the line there will be five lift locks, one guard lock at Newberry, two culverts, three tow path bridges, one of which is for the crossing of White River and the feeder dam at Newberry 425 feet long and eleven feet high from low water of the river. Pains were taken to get accurately the level of the high water marks of the great freshet of January, 1847; and in all cases, except from the crossing of White River above to Newberry, the tow path will be raised one foot (above) this flood. In the estimate of the dam at Newberry, provision is made for a suitable lock to prevent interruption to the navigation of the river.

The duties of the locating party for the season having been closed, it was disbanded on the 25th of October, and the camp equipage carefully stored at Point Commerce, in order for next year's operations. A sufficient number of assistants, and chain and axe men were retained to prepare the line for contract from Point Commerce to Newberry, the letting of which transpired at the former place on the 15th of November. The contracts were taken at fair rates, amounting in the aggregate, for this portion of the line, to \$165,110.00, the estimated cost of the same being \$167,875.00. Length of line 17 miles and six chains.

It is due to our numerous contractors to say, that with but few exceptions, they have conducted their work with spirit and energy, having in many cases, gone through with their contracts under the certain prospect of realizing little or no profit on their work. These men deserve the patronage of the Board of Trustees, and I beg leave, through you, to bring them to a favorable notice of the Board.

In conclusion, it affords me pleasure to say, that the gentlemen who have been associated with me as assistants, viz: Messrs. J. H. Nelson, James Johnstone, R. B. Hanna, William P. Whittle, N. R. Wild, John Berdan and J. P. Pope, have performed their several duties with energy and fidelity, having during the past season performed an amount of labor in their several departments, never surpassed, if ever equaled.

William Ball submitted another report from Terre Haute to Jesse Lynch Williams, Chief Engineer, on December 6th, 1852, which is recorded as the *Annual Report of the Resident Engineer*:

The finished portion of the canal extending to Newbury [Newberry], 59 miles from this place [Terre Haute], was opened for navigation in March, and the division extending from Newbury [Newberry] to Maysville, a distance of 23¼ miles, was prepared for navigation in June last.

...On the Newbury [Newberry] Division there has been paid the aggregate sum of \$162,976.91, on account of

construction including payments for extra bridges, waste weirs, and ditches, amounting to \$3,662.43.

The works about Newbury [Newberry] have been finished in a substantial manner. The dam, 12 feet high above the extreme low water, and 444½ feet long, is I think, the best in the State. It was originally intended to build this dam on a plan similar to those in other parts of the State, but at your suggestion a material modification was made, by which the serious difficulties heretofore encountered from drift-wood and undermining at the lower end of the foundation, is entirely avoided. These important objects having been fully accomplished by the plans adopted, I regard this as a model dam. During the past season a large amount of gravel has been filled in above the dam, effectually stopping the leakage, and rendering the whole secure from undermining.

The cost of completing the works at Newbury [Newberry] was increased some six or eight hundred dollars, by the failure of the contractor to comply with the agreement, upon which, he relinquished the work. We were much delayed, and finally had to procure and pay for all the necessary material.

In the *Annual Report of the Chief Engineer of December 7, 1852*, Jesse Lynch Williams reports:

The two very important and expensive structures, by which the canal is carried over the two forks of White river - the dam across the west fork [at Newberry] and the aqueduct [aqueduct at Petersburg] over the east fork - have been fully completed, and are believed to be safe and durable works. The dam is considered a model structure of its kind. The new and improved form given to the lower slope, dividing it into two successive falls, with horizontal aprons to each, is found to pass off the drift wood with the least possible injury to the dam. The aqueduct [aqueduct] is an imposing structure, of great height and length, and is believed to have been well constructed, both in its masonry and superstructure. The construction and finish of the timber superstructure reflects great credit upon the builder.

The number of boats employed on the canal during the whole or a part of the season is 249, showing no material increase over 1851. The regularity of the navigation, and freedom from interruptions, have enabled the same number of boats to do the enlarged business by making a greater number of trips. But it is apparent that the means of transportation is inadequate to the increasing freight, especially in view of the extension of navigation to the Ohio river, now near at hand.

Charles Butler, W. R. Nofsinger and Thomas Dowling, trustees for the canal, stated the following in their January 1853 *Annual Report of the Board of Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal to the General Assembly of the State of Indiana*:

At the date of the last annual report, the Newberry, Maysville, and Petersburg divisions were unfinished. The trustees have the satisfaction to report, that these divisions have, during the season been finished, and the work paid for, with the

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exception of a small balance upon sections 186 and 192 of the Petersburg Division, which they withhold until those sections are received by them from the contractors....

In the construction of the canal south of Terre Haute, they have generally adopted the location and plans originally contemplated by the State, except that the river lock at Newberry, on the west fork of White river, has been made much longer and wider than was proposed by the State Officers, with a view of more fully accommodating the trade of that river. The aqueduct [aqueduct] on the east fork of the White river has been built on the same level originally contemplated, but the spans have been increased from 45 to 85 feet, thus greatly facilitating [facilitating] the passage of flat boats [on the White River below].

The Trustees refer with satisfaction to the character of these structures, both in design and execution. They will compare favorably with similar structures on any public work in this country, and they reflect credit upon those who have had the immediate supervision of their construction.

It is proper that the trustees should state, in this connection, that to their surprise, they were indicted in the Circuit Court of Greene County, for erecting and maintaining the dam across the west fork of White River, and the proceeding was sustained by the court: and notwithstanding the provisions of the 28th section of the act creating the trust, they were fined by the court in a small sum. The trustees have been since notified that a second indictment has been found by the grand jury of Greene County against them for the same cause; and they respectfully submit to the Legislature, whether they ought not to be protected by a further act of the Legislature, declaring that no suit or indictment shall be allowed against them for the construction and maintenance of such structures as are required to be built in the construction of the canal, which form a part of its established plan, and which are indispensable to its very existence. Of this character are the dam and lock on the west fork of White River, and the aqueduct [aqueduct] across the east fork.

North of Newberry there are still remains of the canal culvert at Lattas Creek. These are visible at low water.

NEWBERRY

Although Newberry was not on the Cross-Cut Canal, as can be seen from the previous reports, it is located to the south of Worthington on the White River and was a canal town being located on the southern portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal. It was first settled by John Ritter in 1822. It was laid out on John O'Neal's land and named for Newberry, North Carolina.

The first house was built by Moses Ritter. It soon had a grist mill and a ferry across the White River. Around 1827 Cary O'Neal opened a store with merchandise valued at \$500. Later Peter Lester and Mr. Hinds operated stores. Some of the leading articles of exchange were beeswax and honey. Benjamin R. Morse,

also in the mercantile business, was the first postmaster. Before the canal was built the town had about twenty families who were blacksmiths, carpenters, coopers, shoemakers and tanners.

When the Wabash & Erie Canal was constructed through the county it had to cross the White River. A wooden crib dam was built across the river to form a slackwater pool so canal boats could enter the river from the canal, go up or down stream and re-enter the canal on the other side of the river. It was located to the west of the present bridge crossing the White River on SR 57. The slackwater pool was beneath the bridge and extended upstream to the northeast.

At the April term of the state legislature in 1852, the Wabash & Erie Canal trustees were indicted by the grand jury for the dam being an alleged nuisance. "This alleged nuisance at Newberry, and thereby backing the water over the lowlands adjoining the river." At the court trial the case was "held under advisement" until the September term. The defendants were found guilty and each of them was assessed a ten dollar fine that September. They appealed their case to the supreme court and the decision was reversed.

During low water the foundation timbers of this "alleged nuisance," the dam, are still visible. When this dam was built it was constructed with a steamboat lock built into it so that steamboats could go up river. The river lock in the south side of the dam was built large enough to admit passage of flatboats but not large enough to accommodate steamboats. Its dimensions were 105 feet long and 21 feet wide.

The pooled water from this dam also provided a source of water power. In a newspaper advertisement Jesse L. Williams, chief engineer, announced the letting of water power as follows:

LETTING OF VALUABLE WATER POWER AT THE NEWBERRY DAM

The erection of this Dam, 11 feet in height, across the West Fork of White river will create an extensive water power, well worthy the attention of manufacturers and capitalists. At the lowest stage of water in White river there is sufficient to propel a very large amount of machinery. The durability and certainty of the power, viewed in connection with the well known destitution of permanent water throughout that section of the State, clearly indicates this as an important manufacturing point. The adjoining counties are capable of producing a large surplus of wheat, and with the stimulus afforded by good merchant mills add the advantages of canal navigation, would undoubtedly furnish an abundant supply of this grain. There is now a communication by canal with Lake Erie, and by the fall of 1853, the same channel will be opened to the Ohio river at Evansville.

A portion of this water power, sufficient to propel not

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less than three run of 4½ feet millstones, and also the power necessary for either one or two saws for lumbering, it now offered for lease to the highest bidder for the term of thirty years, with ground sufficient for the use thereof, lying immediately below the east abutment of the Dam. The minimum annual rent for each run of stones has been fixed at \$100, if a Breast wheel be used, and \$150 with a reaction wheel, and for each saw driven by a reaction wheel \$150, below which rates it cannot be leased.

Proposals, sealed and directed to the undersigned at Terre Haute, will be received until the 1st of September next.

In behalf the Trustees of Wabash and Erie canal.
J.L. Williams
Chief Engineer"

The canal boats had to lock into the river to traverse the slackwater. This required two canal locks. Lock 59 and a Guard Lock, one on either side of the slackwater crossing. The southernmost lock on the north side at the slackwater pool formed by the dam at Newberry was Lock 59. In 1997 Jeff Koehler, CSI director, and a friend took a johnboat down the river in search of this lock's remains. They noticed that near the abutments of two train trestles (one of which is still in place) there was some cribbing in the very turbulent water. Looking more closely at this spot on the northwest edge of the river bank, they found wooden cribbing timbers, wooden cribs and the crib stones. They determined that they had found the tail end of one wall of the old lock. These were the pads of foundation timbers and cribs on which the sandstone combined lock rested. They were photographed.

The Guard Lock was located on the south side of the slackwater pool just above Newberry. (Note that the guard locks were not numbered.) Thus there were three canal locks in total at or near Newberry. These were Lock 58 and 59, and the Guard Lock that allowed canal boats to enter or leave the slackwater. There was also the river lock in the dam to allow passage of flatboats. All of this locking through process took time giving people on the boats an opportunity to do business in the town.

Logs were taken through the lock at the dam in huge rafts. A traveler's account records that John M. Leonard when "speaking of the rafting of logs, he told of the Newberry dam, now almost destroyed (1899) where seven men had lost their lives."

Although the canal was no longer in use in 1875, it had stimulated the growth of the town. At that time Newberry had four dry goods stores, three churches, two drug stores, two saddler's shops, two hotels, two school houses, one flouring and one saw mill, one blacksmith shop, one wagon shop, one tan

yard, one shoe shop, one millinery shop, one planing mill and one cabinet shop. Today there is little business and stores sit vacant. Homes dot the town, but many have fallen in decay. SR 57 does provide the gas station with business.

A traveler journeying on the river in 1899 recorded the following report in his journal on December 14, 1899:

About four miles below Newberry we passed the remains of one of the old Wabash and Erie canal dams. The base is about twenty or thirty feet wide and it is all there, the river having cut a channel to the left of it. It was built of stone, and evidently to stay, as it defied the efforts of the farmers to destroy it until the river solved the problem by going around it. The river is very crooked along this stretch....

The dam mentioned was built of stone. CSI is not sure what this structure was. The closest dam south of Newberry is that at Slinkard's Creek although that dam was 1½ miles not 4 miles below Newberry according to the 1853 Chief Engineer's Report. Also it was built of timber and not stone. The engineer's report lists no other canal dams for many miles after that one. It can't be a lock for the only locks with any stone in them were locks 58 and 59 of the composite plan north of the Newberry dam. This is more likely to have been a mill dam. Not all recorded history can be trusted as being accurate.

BOLD BLUFF (POINT COMMERCE)

The first white settlement in what was to become Greene County was begun in 1813. Five families arrived being led there by John O'Banyon and his family. They built their cabins high atop "Bold Bluff" overlooking both the White River and the Eel River. The village later became Point Commerce.

Alexander Craig, a Shaker from Sullivan County, saw the commercial advantages of the bluff. It would not flood and had two navigable rivers for shipping and trading products. Rivers at the time were the only transportation routes since no roads had been built. Craig brought his family and several other Shakers to join O'Banyon's families on the bluff.

The Shakers, a religious group, had lived in a commune where all property was group owned. They were industrious and worked hard for the benefit of all. They had lived in large dormitories where men were separated from women. During their daily rituals of dancing and the chanting of words, they would have shaking spells.

Those Shakers who accompanied Alexander

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Craig changed their communal living habits. They built cabins scattered around the area and lived as families. A grist mill was erected and run by Craig. The others operated a cotton gin, a blacksmith shop and a distillery.

Sadly, the first death in the township was that of John O'Banyon. There was no sawmill in the area and no lumber to build his coffin. The men from both groups worked together to fashion his coffin from an eight foot poplar log. A huge slag was split off one side of the log. Then they hollowed out enough space to contain O'Banyon's body, placed him inside, hammered down the slab using wooden pins and buried him.

When others died they used a log coffin or sometimes a bark coffin. The latter was made by slitting and removing the bark from a log and placed the body inside the bark tube. Once lumber was available crude wooden coffins were made to fit those who died.

The reason is unknown, but shortly after O'Banyon's death, those who had followed him to the bluff left the settlement. A few years later Alexander Craig died and the settlement was abandoned by his followers as well.

The bluff again was home to a few families in 1824. This was for only a short time of several months and they too left. But below the bluff some individual families were scattered around who had built cabins, cleared the land and done some farming.

Wabash & Erie Canal and the Cross-Cut

It wasn't until 1836 that the bluff became a truly successful settlement. The Internal Improvement Bill was passed that year by the Indiana State Legislature. It included the construction of three canals, a railroad, and several turnpikes. The project was to cost \$11 million. This was at a time when Indiana's tax receipts were \$50,000 annually. The Central Canal was to connect Fort Wayne via the Wabash and Erie Canal at Peru to Indianapolis and then follow the west fork of the White River to Evansville passing through Greene County. The Cross-Cut Canal was to connect these two main canals starting at Terre Haute and following the valley of the Eel River to what is now the town of Worthington.

Canal Men

K.B. Osborn was the W & E Canal Superintendent for the canal from Lafayette to Evansville. He was born in Cayuga County, New York in 1822 and came to Indiana in 1842. He arrived in Greene County in 1849. He was in the hotel business following the canal building. He was also a charter member of the Odd Fellows

in Worthington and a stockholder in the Worthington *Advertiser*, a Whig paper.

William H. Osborn was born on April 3, 1822, in Cayuga County, New York and came to Indiana in 1859. He was one of the contractors on the canal. He began issuing an independent paper, the *Worthington Sun*, in 1874, which he sold in 1876. He was in various businesses, not all successful, but he owned a lot of property.

Alonzo Knight, Joseph Knight and Hugh Stewart were also canal contractors. Their contract was for the feeder dam, the guard bank, the locks and five miles of excavation above. It was estimated that the value of this contract was \$140,000.

Burden, Hutchinson, Pole and Whittle were the engineers. The survey for the canal was taken in 1848. Jesse L. Williams, Chief Engineer of the Canal, and W. H. Ball chose the site for the dam. Others who worked on the canal were James Rouquet, architect; Owen and Bynum, treasurers; and John F. Slinkard, clerk.

James R. Aydelotte, a native of Delaware and Ohio, came to Montgomery County, IN in 1837. He moved to Clinton County, IN around 1842 where he took large contracts to build the Wabash & Erie Canal. He continued aiding in the work until the canal was completed. Then he moved to Gibson County where he resided until his death in 1876. His son, Thomas Aydelotte, was a doctor in Worthington.

When the survey was completed and also when the contracts for the construction of the canal were let, large crowds gathered. Seeing the route and hearing the bidding were great events at that time.

POINT COMMERCE

Two enterprising brothers saw the proposed junction of these two canals - Cross-Cut and Central - as a prime spot to set up business since transportation at the time was still by boat. These were entrepreneurs from Spencer, IN. - James M. H. and John F. Allison.

James Montgomery Higgins Allison was born in Elizabethtown, Maryland, on September 11, 1802. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. John B. Allison, were of British descent, were wealthy and owned many slaves. He was a large portly man, weighing over two hundred pounds. He supported the Whig Party, attended the Methodist church and was described as both a generous person and a business man. He was married twice. His first wife, Julia Ann Payne, died childless only nineteen months after their marriage. In 1828 he remarried taking Julia Ann Applegate, a daughter of a wealthy tobacco

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dealer of Louisville Kentucky, as his wife. They had thirteen children, nine boys and four girls.

John Fletcher Allison, was born in Bourbon County, Kentucky on July 10, 1814, and was a brother to James. When he inherited his father's slaves, he freed them. He believed that one man did not have a right to own another. He was a Whig. He later served three terms in the State Legislature, two in the House of Representatives and one in the Senate. He was an advocate of the Butler Bill. He traveled around the country meeting many people and was well known and well liked. Following his term in the Senate he returned to Greene County where he bought, drained, and sold land south of Worthington. He was an advocate for building the Great Air Limited, a railroad project. He donated 1,200 acres of land for the project valued at that time at \$8,000. He also donated \$1,000 toward the Indianapolis & Vincennes Railroad and assisted in promoting it. He led numerous public projects over the years making great sacrifices of his time and money for the good of the community.

The Allisons began buying up land on both sides of the Eel River where the Cross-Cut Canal was to be built. This land included what was "Bold Bluff" soon to become Point Commerce. Their land lay as far north as Johnstown on the river's east side and some of it was on the west side of the river, a part of which is now Worthington.

John F. Allison began surveying the land on the bluff in April 1836 for the town the Allisons named Point Commerce, a trading place for goods. They anticipated it becoming a huge commercial center. There were 35 lots on the plat they registered on April 22, 1836. They decided to move their store from Spencer intending to buy and ship produce down the river and later, when completed, down the canal. The lumber for their store was obtained at Littlejohn's Mill in Owen County and was floated down the White River from Spencer.

People from Indiana, Ohio and other states also recognized the potential of the area. They began arriving in covered wagons overcoming many hardships to get there. A town of 500 people arose in less than two years. The new residents painted their houses white using whitewash made from the lime gotten by burning mussel shells. The hillside, covered with white houses, white out buildings and white fences amid a green forest, was a beautiful sight for those approaching the town by the river thus the town became known as "Whitetown." At a later time the population of Point Commerce reached 1,200.

The Allisons built a 22 x 40 foot large frame

building to house their store. This was named Allison and Allison. John F. Allison was in charge of the outside branch of the store while James ran it. Their extensive merchandise costing them around thirty thousand dollars annually included all the things that people needed at that time. They bought their stock in New York, shipped it to Pittsburgh, then shipped it down the Ohio River to Louisville and then hauled it by wagon to Point Commerce. They traded this merchandise for produce from the surrounding area since money was in short supply. After shipping and selling this produce, they paid their customers' taxes. This was the only way to raise money for County and State expenses. They continually employed fifty to one hundred men.

John made trips to New Orleans by flatboat to sell produce from the area. Sometimes he went to Louisville and Pittsburgh. He also established another store north of Worthington named Johnstown after himself, John Allison.

The Allisons also built a steam saw and grist mill in 1836 at the mouth of Eel River. Then they built a pork house where they inspected and shipped the pork products derived from 2 to 4 thousand hogs annually. They built a large warehouse to receive grain, tobacco and all the various other types of produce. They usually shipped around 25 boat loads of produce a year.

Junction House

The Junction House hotel was built at Point Commerce in 1837 by James Allison. It was named "Junction" for the junction of the two canals and the junction of the two rivers James did not have the time to run it himself. He asked his brother-in-law, Dr. David Shepherd, to be the landlord. Shepherd was married to Mahala Allison, James' sister.

At that time hotel or tavern rates were set by law. These were: Dinner (Lunch) - 25 cents, Breakfast-20 cents; Supper-20 cents, Corn and Hay for the Horse-25 cents, ½ Pint Rum-37 cents, ½ Pint Brandy-50 cents, Board and Lodging for One week-\$2.00.

The Junction House was important to the local people as well as to travelers, for it housed the post office. The arrival of the mail was probably the most important weekly occurrence. Through a Star-Route Contract, mail that arrived in Washington, IN was taken to Sullivan, In and then to the Junction House by James Stalcup, who rode the 40 mile route. If the weather was good the mail carrier would charge a fee and drive a hack bringing passengers and produce with him. If the weather was bad he would ride horseback or walk. He would announce his arrival as he came into the town by blowing a bugle. This would alert the citizens to pick up

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their mail or bring letters to be sent. It was an occasion to gather at the hotel and visit with others from the community.

Once inside the hotel, the carrier would dump the mail onto a table or the floor. Then the postmaster would call out the name on the letter or package. When his name was called, a person answered "Here" and the letter was thrown over the top of the general mailboxes, which stood seven or eight feet tall. There would be a scramble to catch the letter. If the person missed the calling of his name or if the person was not present, the letter was placed in alphabetically arranged pigeon holes in the general mailboxes to be claimed later at the window. These general mailboxes were not open to the public on the outside. The recipient of the letter would pay 25 cents to receive his mail. The sender did not pay.

Church services were originally held in private homes, but as the population grew the Junction House was put to use. Sometimes the crowd was too large to be accommodated in its dining room and the doors to the bar room had to be opened.

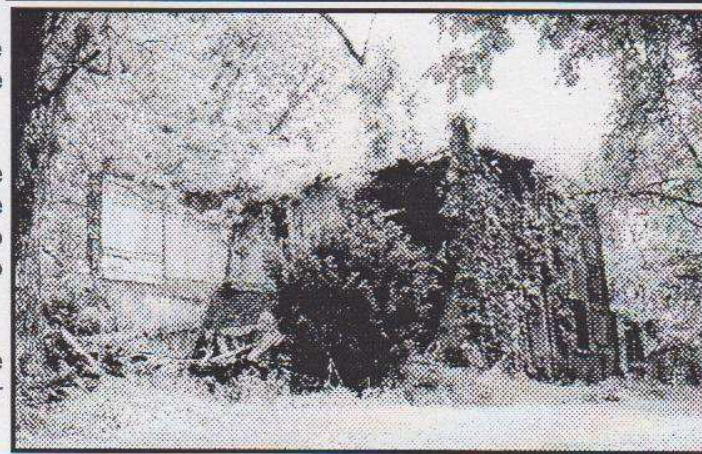
The Junction House was razed after the decline of Point Commerce by Tip Osborn in 1880. Its lumber was used to build the Hedden Hotel in Worthington.

The same year that the Junction House was built (1837), Dr. Shepherd built a one story brick house. It had two small porticos and a back porch. This plan seems to have been copied by John Allison on the lower floor of a home he built a few years later. The house's foundation was of stone. Its walls were very thick. Many of the rooms had old fashioned chair rails, wide baseboards, and heavy doors that swung on three hinges.

Just north of Dr. Shepherd's home were buried the first citizens who died in the community. Their bodies were later moved to the Hays Cemetery, east of Point Commerce, on the farm of Mark Hays.

Allison House

It wasn't until 1838 that James Allison brought his family to Point Commerce. They lived in a cottage just east of the Junction Hotel. As he gained in wealth he built them a brick home in 1844. This house was standing in 1998 and seen on "The Final Link" tour taken by the Canal Society of Indiana. It was in very poor condition. It had no trespassing signs around it and its roof had fallen in. It was an elegant building in its day, a show place in the community. It overlooked the junction of the Eel and White rivers and had a commanding view at the time the trees were cleared. The two-



The once magnificent Allison house in 1994 and 2008
P-Bob Schmidt

story building had ten rooms with high ceilings. Big fireplaces, wide baseboards, impressive chair rails, deep window ledges and six-inch-wide floor boards were used in most of the rooms. Under one of these rooms was a large fruit cellar. The rest of the house sat on a foundation of large sandstone blocks. It had three porches, a small portico on the front that opened into a hall, a small one on the west side and a large long double verandah on the east side with a long enclosed room above it. On the same property was built a dairy house that had architecture corresponding with that of the main house.

Across the street from this home John Allison built a white two-story frame house. His home was arranged exactly like James Allison's home, even down to the dairy house. Its outside appearance was different in that it was built of wood. It was sold to Sam Hays and then to Taylor Messic. Messic tore it down to build another home on the hill from its lumber.

The Courthouse

The courthouse that was to cost \$5,157 was started by C. B. Hartwell, but after being paid his first payment, he left the state. Andrew Downing and Sam-

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uel Simons, his sureties, had to complete it. It was finished in 1839. Downing later built the jail in 1859-50 for over \$9,000.

Andrew Downing owned a blast furnace about one mile from Bloomfield. An article that appeared in the February 2007 issue of *The Hoosier Packet* is included in the Canawlers at Rest portion of this book.

The School

Point Commerce was in need of a school and a place to worship, so in 1849 a two-story brick building was erected. It was 40 foot by 80 foot in size. It stood across the street from Dr. Shepherd's home. The bricks for the building were made from the soil between Dr. Shepherd's home and that of Ben Hays. When completed the lower floor was used for schoolrooms and the upper floor for religious services. A stone slab proclaimed the building as the "Wesley Chapel, ME Church, 1849." James Allison contributed \$3,000 to the building fund. He also was very active in securing a teacher and preacher for the building. When the church was razed in 1882, the slab was used to cover the cistern on the property of Mark Hays. Later it was moved to the yard north of the Worthington Methodist Church. The bricks from the church were used to build the home of Hays. The people of Point Commerce believed in recycling building materials.

Contributing to the growth of Point Commerce were the two ferries, which provided a way of crossing the rivers. Smith's Ferry was located just below Point Commerce. Osborn Ferry was north of the town. With this easy access to the town, a flouring mill that was run by water power was built on the west side of the Eel River. Nearby was once located a dam that pooled the water for the mill. The mill was the only one in the county. Farmers would travel two to three days from as far away as Sullivan County to have their wheat ground. They tried to have a years worth ground at a time since the journey was so swampy and muddy that it took teams of oxen to pull the wagons.

The mill had several different owners and operators. Sam Miller ran it for many years. Henry Newsom was the last owner. The mill was finally destroyed by a fire that was set by a group of Native Americans passing through the area. It is unknown why they did this.

A bridge across the Eel River was erected around 1843-44. Its estimated cost was \$736,55.

In 1864 Sam Miller built a home that stood on a stone foundation, the stone having been quarried near the Devil's Tea Table located east of Point Commerce. This quarry also provided the foundation for the old Eel

River bridge. When Sam died his son, Frederick, occupied the home until 1888, when he sold it to Ben Hays. It was a big two-story house that in later years was painted yellow. It was razed when the new State Highway 67 was built.

Before long Point Commerce was a thriving town with over 100 houses scattered over the hillsides. It had a main square of one block. The school house sat on one of the lots and there were other lots to the east. It sported blacksmiths coopers, doctors, gunsmiths, milliners, shoemakers and tanners. There were also saw mills, coffee houses and distilleries. For many years it was Greene County's model town. It was noted for its thrift and enterprise, its cleanliness, its advanced commercial activity and its progress in education and religion.

All of these businesses and people needed the supplies the Allison's store provided and business boomed. As stated before, their store dealt more in trading farm produce for their store's stock than in cash since money was scarce. This caused the Allison's little problem, because they simply shipped this produce down the river to New Orleans. It was not uncommon to ship as many as 15 to 25 flatboat loads of produce in a year. A major part of their cargo was pork packed in barrels and covered in brine. The only problem to this type of transportation was that the rivers were too high and the current too swift in the spring, they were frozen over in the winter, or they were too low to float a boat in late summer. The Allison's had to be selective in when they shipped. They often had in their warehouses and pork houses a stock of over \$40,000 worth of pork and produce waiting for the river to reach boating stage.

A traveler journeying on the river on December 13, 1899 tells what happened to these warehouses. He writes:

There used to be huge packing establishments along the river at this point, but they passed with the flatboat into oblivion and the town relies now chiefly upon the fertile farms that surround it. There are some good coal fields within a short distance, but they are worked in such a primitive manner as to be scarcely profitable....

William C. Andrews was also one of Point Commerce's early settlers. He was born in Essex County, New York in 1812 and moved to Franklin County, Ohio, where he became a clerk at a store in Worthington, OH at age 12. He clerked in Gambier, OH from 1837-1839 when he came to Greene County with Dayton Topping. He and Topping were in the mercantile business and he was married to Topping's sister, Eunice. They had three children. Eunice died on April 30, 1852. Andrews then married Josephine Stalcup and they had three children.

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Andrews was a lawyer admitted to practice in 1859. He and J. E. Miller went into a partnership in merchandising from 1865-1971 when Miller moved his woolen factory to Worthington, IN. He then went into partnership with C. J. Barrackman in the mercantile business, which they moved to Worthington. One year their business purchased 15,000 bushels of wheat to be shipped to market via the canal.

He was Justice of the Peace in Point Commerce and later in Worthington for more than 25 years. He was elected Clerk for Worthington in 1874, a town trustee in 1878 and served the last three months of 1879 as trustee succeeding J. M. Foster.

He was president and stockholder of the Worthington Bank in 1875. He also was a stockholders on the *Worthington Advertiser*. He was considered a radical but participated in the Whig and later the Republican parties. He was a member of the Odd Fellows and of the Protestant Episcopal Church. He later participated in real estate, collections and insurance.

Failure of Point Commerce

Point Commerce eventually failed and is little more than a few buildings on "Bold Bluff" today. What factors contributed to this decline?"

1. In 1851 a huge cholera epidemic spread throughout the country. Greene County and Point Commerce were no exception. The town's four doctors were hit first, which left Point Commerce without medical help. Over 125 people in the town of 500 died. Perhaps this number would have been fewer if medical aid had been available. Others fled the town hoping to escape the disease.

2. James Allison became ill. They thought he would die. The Allison brothers had been overly generous to the community with their resources and the firm of Allison and Allison had made some imprudent business ventures. Their finances crashed in 1852.

3. A huge fire swept through the town about three years following the cholera epidemic.

4. The proposed junction of the Central Canal and the Cross-Cut Canal at Point Commerce never materialized.

Both of the Allison Brothers, who risked so much for the proposed canal, later died in Indianapolis, John in 1877 and James in 1885. John's body was brought back to Point Commerce for burial alongside his wife in Hays Cemetery. Many other settlers were buried there as well.

In 1917 a new cut was made for the Eel River that was half way between the railroad bridge and the wagon bridge This cut completely changed point Commerce's landscape. The few homes that remained in the area did not get electricity until October 21, 1929.

PLATTING WORTHINGTON

Before 1849 and while Point Commerce was still thriving, two of her influential businessmen, William C. Andrews and Christian J. Barrackman, purchased several hundred acres of land on the west side of the river. They were ready for the announcement on April 1849 that said the Wabash and Erie Canal was to be completed and rerouted. They hired a surveyor and platted out 94 lots on both sides of the canal's route. Mr. Andrews had come from Worthington, OH, and gave this new town the name Worthington in its honor. The citizens of Point Commerce didn't want another town so close to theirs. They tried to block the sale of lots.

Mr. Barrackman told the surveyor that he wanted all the streets to run north to south and east to west. But he hadn't taken into consideration the large Native American mound that was in the way or the old roadway that ran northeast to the river. Therefore, one north-south street had to be located west of the mound. This is today's Washington Street. The old roadway paralleled the canal and entered the area at an angle. This was left in place becoming Commercial Street or State Highway 67.

The junction of Washington Street and Commercial Street was 500 feet south of the mound and a triangle was formed that became the public center of the town. The mound was located at the base of the triangle. It covered most of the block that is now occupied by First Farmers State Bank, True Value Hardware and others. This public triangle made Worthington unique in that most towns have public squares.

The Mound

The Worthington mound was a very large, slightly oval mound, which measured 360 feet wide north to south and somewhere between 360-390 feet long from east to west. At its highest point it was 9 feet 6 inches high. It was built from nearly 4000 cubic yards of soil that was transported from a marsh one-quarter to one-half mile north of the site. The Native Americans did not have an easy way to transport the dirt. They probably used baskets. A calculation has been made that figures it would have taken 200 persons about 60 days to move over 108,000 baskets of soil.

The excavation of the area's mounds was done by Dr. Black from Indiana University and Fred Dyer and

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Bernard Bucher from Worthington. In the Worthington mound they found indications of a communal home built within the mound with an earthen roof and sides. There were ashes in what was once a fireplace and the remains of a chimney. The ashes contained broken bits of household pottery and bone and stone implements. No war like objects were found indicating a peaceful people. Indications of poles used to support the earthen roof were seen. Some authorities believe it housed a large communal tribal family. They also found a crushed skull indicating murder by a hard blow. It is thought that the murder might have made the mound taboo to habitation and then it became a dedicated burial spot.

Earlier William C. Andrews excavated the mound's east side to build the Franklin House. He found an oval vault that had temporarily received Indian bodies until they were buried during epochal national funerals.

By March of 1880 the Terre Haute & Southeastern Railroad reached Worthington and needed to be connected to the Indianapolis and Vincennes Railroad. In order to do this, the abandoned Wabash and Erie Canal bed had to be filled in. This was accomplished under the direction of Calvin S. Taylor, who took the earth from the mound being very careful to preserve the relics found and keeping measurements of the finds. Today the mound is gone and forgotten.

The Triangle

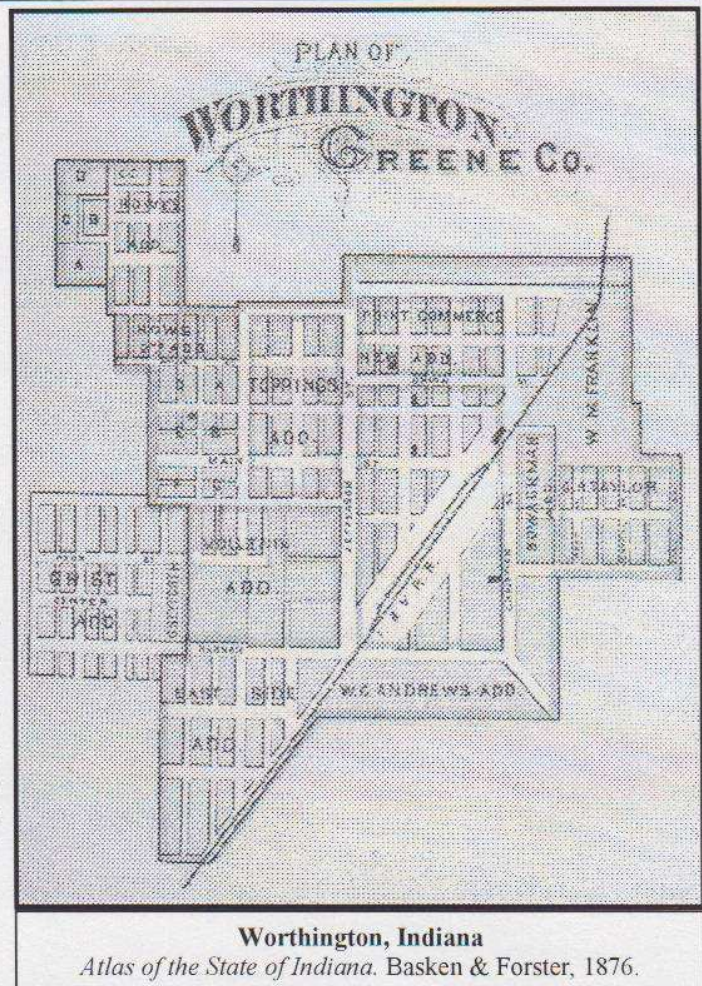
Worthington's Main Street was at the southern boundary of Samuel Harrah's holdings. It crossed the tip of the triangle. Harrah built a store on the corner of Main and Washington. He then decided to beautify the town and planted 100 hard maples along Main Street.

The triangle served the same purpose as most town squares. Hitching rails were placed around it for farmers to tie up their horses when doing business in town. A well was dug on the triangle in 1884 to provide water for the horses and their owners. It had a roof over it that made it a shelter house. It had seats to rest on and a fence around it.

The shelter house was replaced with a fountain that operated with water from an artesian well when it became run down. The water was thought to be healthy and people came to fill jugs with it. Over the years this fountain was replaced with a concrete one and then with a fountain much like the first one.

The Cotton Field

Worthington was actually built on the site of an earlier 50 acre cotton field. This field had 5 acre plots that local farmers cultivated. Anyone with any knowl-



Worthington, Indiana
Atlas of the State of Indiana. Basken & Forster, 1876.

edge of cotton knows that cotton requires intensive work and small fields are all an individual farmer can manage. The farmers would hire young people to pick the cotton at harvest. They would hold picking bees that were major social events.

Cotton gins were built to clean and remove the seeds from the cotton. To add strength to its fibers for knitting socks, the women would add wolf or fox hair. But the cotton growing season was really not long enough. Often the cotton hadn't ripened before the fall frost and the crop was lost.

Wool was a stronger fiber and made more comfortable clothing. Mr. Black decided to bring sheep to the area. Wolves, panthers and other predators were so common at the time that the sheep had to be watched constantly.

Worthington Settled

To get their newly platted town going, Andrews and Barrackman decided to move their store from Point Commerce to Worthington. Other merchants followed suit and the town grew.

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Andrews and Barrackman's business was much like that of the Allisons. They bought produce, pork and grain from the farmers, built flatboats, and shipped the cargo to New Orleans. In one record year they shipped 15,000 bushels of wheat by canal boat. They also donated the lot upon which the Protestant Methodists built a frame church.

A problem arose as to how to get the money (several thousand dollars in gold and silver) back to Indiana after one very successful trip to New Orleans. Mr. Andrews found it too hard to carry on his person and was afraid of being robbed. He put the money in a barrel, unknown to anyone else, and had the barrel shipped to Louisville, KY. He and a trusted assistant traveled as passengers on the boat and took turns guarding the barrel. When they docked in Louisville, Andrews put the barrel on a wagon and hauled it back to Worthington.

Wabash and Erie Canal

The route of the Wabash and Erie Canal was changed to run to Evansville. The Cross-Cut Canal had been completed from Terre Haute to where Worthington would be built. A 20-mile portion of the Central Canal had been completed northeast from Evansville. The Wabash and Erie took over these completed portions. The final link was built joining the Cross-Cut to the Lower Central Canal between Port Gibson and Worthington.

The new route of the Wabash and Erie Canal passed through Greene County where Worthington now stands. It was completed through the county during the years 1849-50. It ran north to south as is described in the *History of Greene & Sullivan Counties* published in 1884 as follows:

Entering the county at Johnstown, thence down to Worthington; thence along the west side of the river to Newberry, where a dam was built and the river crossed; thence southwardly into Daviess County.

The canal was dug in the standard way of the time. Men with money contracted to build sections of it. Irishmen provided the labor using spades, shovels, picks, wheelbarrows, one-horse carts and sometimes scrapers.

The citizens on the county awaited the opening of the Wabash and Erie Cross-Cut portion of the canal. There was great celebration in 1850 when the first canal boat the "Aeolus" [spelled Oleus in some histories] arrived carrying passengers from Terre Haute. Quite a few of the citizens from Greene County went to Terre Haute to ride that boat into Worthington. Others took a "grand excursion" up the canal to Terre Haute from Worthington when regular canal boat traffic was opened

to the north in 1850.

By 1853 the canal was opened all the way to Evansville. The owner of the iron furnace, Andrew Downing, owned two canal boats on which he shipped his iron products to Evansville. He was also a merchant in Bloomfield. His canal boat captains were Paul Thompson and his brother, Alexander Thompson, who joined the Thirteenth Battery, Light Artillery for the Civil War in 1862. One of Downing's boats was wrecked at the Richland cut-off where its remains were imbedded in the canal bank.

Other boats were owned by Start & Col, Worthington flour merchants, and by Peter C. Vanslyke, Bloomfield shipper of grain and other products. Vanslyke started his small horse mill in Bloomfield to supply meal to his distillery, which had a production capacity of twenty gallons a day. He had two canal boats named the "John H. Eller" and the "H. T. Ford." See more about Vanslyke in the *Canawlers At Rest* portion of this book.

Even though there were six locks on the Wabash and Erie Canal in Greene County to control the water levels, heavily loaded boats could not use the canal in this area. There simply wasn't enough water available to maintain the proper depth of water to float them.

From 1851 to 1859 business on the canal was fairly good. The canal system operated from Worthington south to Evansville for about 6 years and from Worthington to the north about 10 years. Then it was almost abandoned. At various times they tried to revive it. It did some business until about 1863, but it could not be depended on. It soon became an eyesore and was regarded as a nuisance. The upkeep of the canal was too expensive. But it must be remembered that the canal is why Worthington was originally built.

The Newspaper

The *Advertiser*, Greene County's first newspaper, was established in 1853 by two men who had been publishing a paper in Salem, IN. They came to town with a full outfit to print the 6-column folio. The first paper cost subscribers \$1.50 a year. Through its 148 years the owners and the paper's name changed as follows: *The Hoosier Blade*, *The White River Valley Times*, *The Worthington Gazette*, and *The Worthington Times*.

The Railroad

August 1869 saw the Indianapolis and Vincennes Railroad completed to Worthington. A crowd of around 6,000 citizens, many who had never before seen a train, gathered as it puffed into town. The Terre Haute

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and Southern reached the town ten years later. These railroads further stimulated the growth of the town. One of them purchased the canal and laid its tracks on the tow path. At that time soil from the mound was used to fill in portions of the canal bed.

Worthington had a water tank to supply the steam engines' boiler with water. It also had a turntable for turning the trains around. Trains became more numerous and profitable. At one time there were 35 trains passing through the town daily.

It wasn't until the spring of 1870 that Worthington's citizens petitioned to hold an election to decide if it should incorporate and have its own town government. The vote was favorable. This new government constructed wooden sidewalks, which through the years were changed to brick and then concrete. They also drained the stagnant water from the remaining canal bed in town and filled it in with dirt. They had a 10 ft. by 6 ft. jail that was 8 ft. high built for \$150.

The Bank

The first bank with a stock of \$30,000 was organized in 1872. This was followed by another bank three years later and others over the years. Sometimes one bank bought out the other.

The Flood

Worthington encountered a major flood in 1875. Trains could enter the town from the north, go as far south as possible before the water put out the fire in the firebox, and reverse using the remaining steam to get back into town. This kept the town from being completely inaccessible.

The Telephone

It seems reasonable that the first telephone lines ran from Worthington to Bloomfield, the county seat. Oral history tells us that two of Worthington's boys became fascinated with the railroad's telegraph system. One boy's father encouraged his son by buying two telegraph sets of that the boys could communicate from one home to the other. When the boys learned of the invention of the telephone, their interest was transferred to it. Soon they set up a telephone line from Worthington to Bloomfield. A telephone company establishing a system for the town purchased the boys' line.

Worthington's Industry

As the population grew, industries boomed. By the 1880's Worthington had a large business center. "The Big Mill" owned by Mr. Darnell covered 5 acres at

the junction of the Eel and White Rivers. It sawed the logs that were floated down the river and shipped the lumber by rail. One year it shipped over 4 million board feet of walnut lumber to New York. Other lumber shipped was cottonwood, gum, hackberry and sycamore. It had a 72" saw, a 64" circular saw and planers with which they finished the lumber for home building.

The clay about four miles north of town was of exceptionally good quality, Worthington Potteries owned by Esquire George Wills of Northampton, England, made fruit jars, milk platters and butter crocks, which were purchased locally or shipped by rail. Worthington Brick and Tile Company was located on the Terre Haute Road west of town. This yard produced as many as 30,000 bricks in a day. It employed 15-20 men.

Boilers and hoisting machinery were made at a foundry and machine works. Two mills ground wheat into flour, Worthington Flouring Mill and Gilt Edge Flour Mill. Plow handles, clothes pins, screen doors and other wooden items were made at the Beachwood factory. Five thousand bobsled runners were ordered and produced in this factory one year.

There was a large poultry packing house and two smaller ones. Poultry was put in refrigerated railcars for shipments directly to New York. The Armour Creamery shipped to various cities closed to home. Farmers brought their milk to the creamery for processing. When the building burned down in 1925, over 60 people were without jobs.

Other establishments included eight grocery stores, six churches, five saloons, five dry goods stores, three hotels, three drugstores, two undertaking businesses, a laundry, a butchering business and a weather station. The daily weather report was reported to the local citizens by raising signal flags atop a flag pole located on the triangle in front of Dr. Squire's office. The Dr. would get the daily report by telegraph and hoist the flags.

The Hotels

This was before the time of advertising and ordering from catalogs, newspapers, magazines and television. Salesmen called on the businesses to demonstrate and sell their products. These traveling men needed places to stay overnight. As early as 1853 the Osborn House registered 437 guests in one month. The Franklin House located on the old mound and the Williams House built by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Williams in 1890 also accommodated the travelers. The Williams House was "modern" for the time. It had a basement, which not only provided storage space for food but had room for a furnace to supply the rooms with heated warm air. The local people also enjoyed the comfort of the hotel. It

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served dinners to them as well as to the travelers. It also sponsored dances.

The large front porch of the hotel was against the sidewalk with a second story porch above it. To enter the hotel the traveler climbed a wide set of steps and came in through two sets of double doors. One set of doors led to the hotel's main floor with its large lobby, dining room, kitchens, and living quarters for the Williams family. The second set opened to a wide stairs to the second floor where there was a large room lighted during the day by a skylight and at night by hanging lamps. Off this room were four halls. Guest rooms lined the halls and each hall had a large washroom. There were no private baths.

Much of the time the salesmen came to town by rail. They would then rent a horse and perhaps a wagon or buggy to call on the area's businesses to sell their products. They were known as "drummers" for the went around "drumming up trade."

The Homes

It appears that there were two men who worked together to build most of the early homes in Worthington. These were James M. Dyer and John Kayser. Dyer selected and provided the materials with which to build the homes. He later established a lumber yard on Commercial street that burned down in 1991. Kayser was the actual builder of the homes.

The early homes were built on the east side of town where the land was higher in elevation. This was smart as proven by the flood of 1913. At that time the railroad grade, which was thought to protect the town, was broken through by the flood water. Several homes in the northern part of town were flooded and the families had to be evacuated. The roads around the town were all flooded and with the rail line washed out, the town was isolated.

The Schools

Students from Worthington at first attended the academy that was on the hill at Point Commerce. It compared to today's high school and had two teachers.

The citizens of Greene County knew the importance of education. Elementary grades were taught by Miss Julia Taylor in her home and by another man in a log house. As early as 1839 education was available at the five or six one-room elementary schools in Jefferson and Eel River townships. School often only lasted about three months during the winter. One recorded fee prior to 1850 was \$1.50 per student. By 1870 when Worthington was incorporated, there was a school on South

Myra Street and another one-story brick school on the corner of another street.

The first high school was organized in 1875 in Greene County and was the area's only commissioned high school for many years. It was located in a large building built that year to house both elementary and high school grades. Students would often come from Coal City and Bloomfield and live with friends or relatives so that they might attend the school. The school added a gymnasium 2½ blocks away in 1945. In 1955 the present school building was constructed adjacent to the gymnasium to house both elementary and high grades. Worthington High School has been closed.

The Churches

Recorded history mentions an early log church built on high ground on the west side of Jefferson Street in Worthington. The church floor was built about three feet above the ground. At that time livestock roamed the streets at will. A bunch of hogs were attracted to the shade provided under the church floor and they moved in. The animals would squeal and fight and they smelled bad. They could not be driven away. Finally things became so intolerable that the people were driven away.

1850 saw the building of the Protestant Methodist Church, which remained active until after the Civil War. In 1859 the brick Christian Church was built on the hill on the east side of town. Prior to that its members worshipped in homes and school houses. Through the years its ownership transferred to the Nazarene Church and then to the Living Christian Church. The Christian Church the built at the corner of Main and Lafayette Streets in 1915.

St. Matthews Episcopal Church's frame building stood on Main Street where later a GTE Telephone building was located. The congregation of the Methodist Episcopal Church first built a frame church on the southwest corner of Willie and Jefferson Streets. It cost \$800. It was moved to a lot donated by Sophia Folsom on Main and Lafayette Streets. In 1901 a new brick building was erected with bricks made west of town at the Cantwell brick yard.

In 1869 the Baptist Church was organized. Its original building has been enlarged and remodeled over the years.

Major Events and Attractions

The citizens of Worthington enjoy congregating for special events. On July 4, 1884 over 3,000 people attended a huge fireworks celebration held at the Fair Grounds. Another 5,000 attended the Worthington Corn

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Fair held on the triangle in January 1895. It was organized by J. E. Miller and was so successful that he was asked to manage a corn fair for Edinburgh. The Worthington fair had beautiful weather with snow covering the ground. The largest load of corn was that of Fred Jessup. He had 32 horses pulling a load that was 44 feet long, 7 feet wide and 6 feet high. The smallest load was pulled by a Newfoundland dog and another was pulled by a large horse and a small pony. Probably the strangest team was the combination of a mule, a cow and a Billy goat.

Worthington even had a horse racing track located north of present Worthington Park. Wilson Race Tracks operated from 1895 to 1905 and admission was ten cents. On one July 4th over 10,000 people paid to see the race and the fireworks celebration.

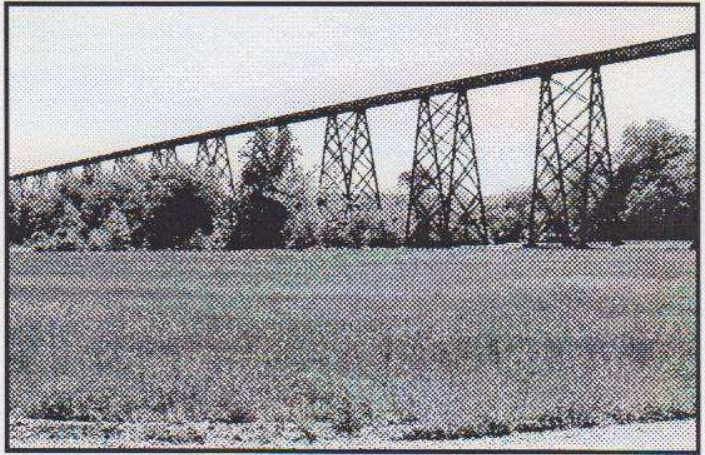
The Greene County Fair was hosted by Worthington for many years at the park. For years a big parade was held in conjunction with the fair. Floats were built and decorated with tissue paper flowers and papier mache figures by organizations and churches, who competed for prizes.

During the depression a Civil Conservation Corp camp was located in Worthington where the school now stands. The young men, who were without work, were given jobs by the government through this program to do things for the community. Much of the group's work was planting trees in Shakamak and McCormick's Creek State Parks located nearby.

A limb of the huge sycamore tree known as the "Greene Giant" is in the city park. The 100 foot tall, 500 year old tree grew on the Dixon farm that was located on the east side of White River. It measured a little over 42 feet in circumference about five feet above the ground. Its trunk divided about 15 feet above ground into two huge limbs, the smaller of these is on display in the park. It is said to have been the largest deciduous tree in the United States. Pioneers passing through the area often camped beneath it and built fires so near its base that some think this caused it to become hollow. As people learned of the tree more came to see it, many of whom carved their initials on its trunk opening it to insects and decay. Five men paddled a big canoe through its fork during the 1875 flood and marked the water level. When the tree died a lady wrote about it and one possible cause of its death. She also had picture postcards made to sell. In 1925 a bad windstorm caused a part of the tree to fall. The section of one limb was moved to the park to save part of it.

A rock formation on the bluff of Mark Hays farm overlooking White River east of Point Commerce is known to residents as the "Devil's Tea Table." Native

Americans and early settlers used it as a lookout and possibly for religious ceremonies. It attracted people from miles around as a picnic spot. Other nearby rock formations are known as "Fat Man's Squeeze" and the "Devil's Chair."



This huge trestle attracts people from all over the United States to this very remote area in Greene County. Photo-Bob Schmidt 2008

Railroad Trestle

In 1905-06 the Indianapolis Southern Railroad built the highest trestle in the United States at the time across a valley in eastern Greene County. It stands today and is 157 feet high and 2,300 feet long, almost 1/2 mile in length. The Illinois Central Railroad still uses this trestle, which is one of the three largest trestles in the world.

The population center of the United States was in Greene County near Linton, Indiana, in 1930. As the population expanded this center has continued to move west.

Greene County had shaft underground coal mines and later strip mines that employed many of Worthington's men. They were never the larger coal mines found in other areas, but they left behind pits and lakes.

Worthington Celebrities

Fred Jewell, the son of a Worthington attorney, had no formal music training other than that given him by his father, but he won fame throughout neighboring states as a band director and composer. He conducted the bands for the Ringling Brothers Circus and the Barnum and Bailey Circus from 1897 to 1917. Then he published music in Iowa and was a band leader there from 1920-22. He returned to Worthington in 1922 bringing along his publishing business, teaching music at the public school and organizing a band. He went to Florida to direct a concert band, returned to Worthington

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later as the school band director and became the Murat Shrine Band director in Indianapolis.

Fred Jewell died in 1936 and is remembered by a plaque on the entrance to the park. He composed over 150 pieces of music, most of which were marches. Some were published under his pen name, J. E. Wells.

Captain David Smith learned of the ocean's oldest ship, a sunken British prison ship named "Success," which was launched in 1790 and went down off the Australian coast. He saved \$5,000 to purchase the ship and had it raised off the ocean floor, refitted its sails and sailed it to Boston in 1912. This earned him international fame. He made several trips up and down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers with it. After adding a steam engine, he sailed it to almost every U.S. port. He even took it to the Chicago World's Fair on Lake Michigan in the 1930s.

Smith returned to Worthington after selling the ship and tried to develop an oil field nearby. He hit a lot of dry holes and this dream never materialized. He formed "Lake Eva" on his farm west of Worthington by building a dam. This lake he stocked with ten tons of fish from Tennessee and king sized Louisiana frogs. It was a fisherman's paradise. The lake was drained after his wife died. He moved to Indianapolis where he resided in semi-seclusion until his death.

Herbert Yardley, who worked as a telegraph operator after graduating from high school, created a technique to decode diplomatic messages of foreign governments. The United States War Department and State Department used this technique during World War I. He was given a budget of \$100,000 and employed 50 decoders known as the "Black Chamber." After the war his services weren't needed and he wrote a book entitled "The American Black Chamber," which told of his experiences. He wrote several other books that were published. One was made into a movie. He was also in the employ of the Chinese for a while to head up their message decoding.

JOHNSTOWN

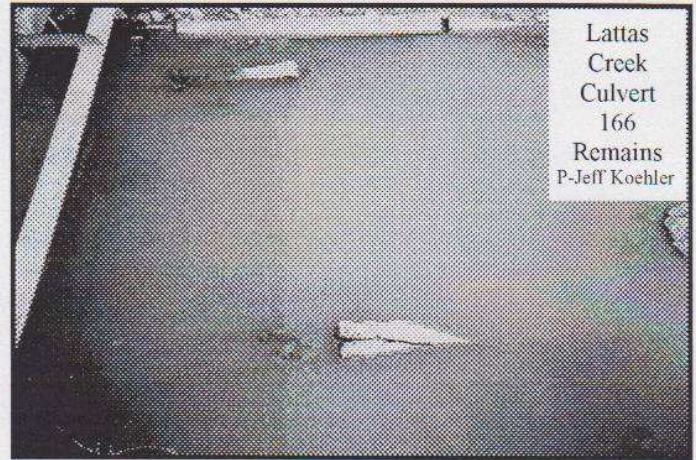
Pioneers from North Carolina arrived in the southwest corner of Owen county near Greene county in 1818. Colonel John Stokely came with them and located where Johnstown eventually was established. He is remembered for the field glasses he owned with which he hunted bees.

Issac Hubbell, came to America to seek his own fortune after his brother received the family's inheritance. In 1830 Issac built a log grist mill on Eel River. At a later time his son Aaron built a frame building that

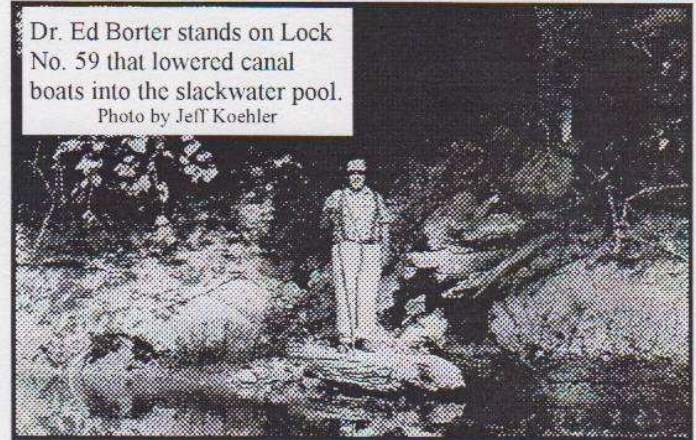
housed better machinery for grinding grist and also included a saw mill.

When it was announced that a canal would pass through the area John F. Allison built his store on Eel River sometime after 1836 and figured a town would grow up there. He called the town John's town or Johnstown after himself.

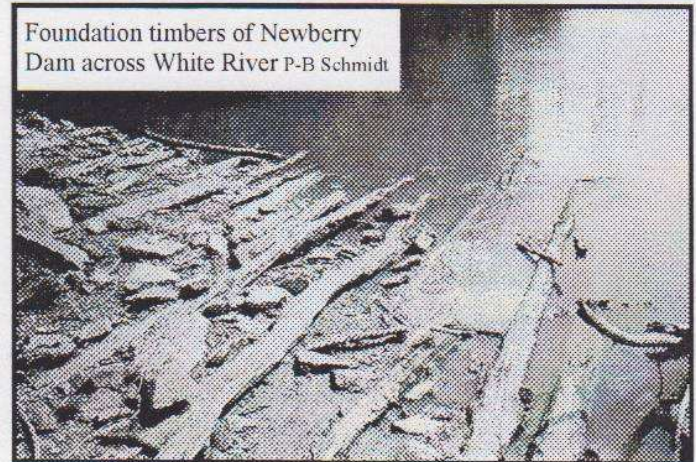
His prediction came true. John's town grew up on both sides of the Eel River with part of it in Greene county and part of it in Owen county. When the Cross-Cut was built it ran through Johnstown in Greene



Lattas
Creek
Culvert
166
Remains
P-Jeff Koehler



Dr. Ed Borter stands on Lock
No. 59 that lowered canal
boats into the slackwater pool.
Photo by Jeff Koehler



Foundation timbers of Newberry
Dam across White River P-B Schmidt

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county and just an extremely short stretch of it curved into and back out of Owen county returning to Greene county.

Johnstown became an important place during canal times. However, there was bad blood between the people of Johnstown and Point Commerce over the river dam at Point Commerce that backed up water to Johnstown. After some litigation the trouble ended.

The middle 1800s were the most prosperous time for Johnstown. A short ten years after the Wabash & Erie Canal was opened from Toledo to Evansville the railroad came through and took the traffic from the canal. Today only a part of the towpath and canal prism remain.

In Greene County on the Wabash & Erie Canal beyond the Cross-Cut below Worthington there are the remains of a few canal structures. We hope to see the remains of Lock 59 at the Newberry slackwater.

End of an Era

Although the Wabash & Erie Canal and its Cross-Cut provided a means of importing needed goods from distant centers and shipping crops and produce both south and east, it had its problems. For long periods of time it was shut down by nature and by man. This was due to cave-ins or structure damage due to floods especially on the portion between Terre Haute and Evansville. In Clay county, the "Regulators" blew up of the reservoirs and feeder dam time after time.

By 1859 the railroads had taken so much passenger and freight business away from the canal that its revenues were not enough to pay for repairs let alone show a profit. An attempt was made to continue operations on some sections for a short time and the State leased sections to private operators, but it was not enough. The canal, which had played a prominent role in developing the State by bringing in settlers who established farms and businesses in towns along its route, had been surpassed by technology.

CANAL RELATED NEWSPAPER ITEMS IN CLAY & GREENE COUNTIES AND POINTS SOUTH

Compiled by Dixie Kline Richardson, former Owen County Historian, these items appeared in the August 2004, and April, May and June, 2005 issues of *The Hoosier Packet*.

These excerpts from microfilmed newspapers were gathered during a research project unrelated to the canal, hence this is not a comprehensive collection and should not be construed as such. They are from Worthington, Greene County papers including *The White River Valley Times*, *White River Gazette*, *Worthington Advertiser*, *Worthington Gazette*, *Worthington Times* (the basic evolution of the same paper, and from Clay County papers including *Bowling Green Advocate*, *Echo* and weekly *Hoosier Patriot*. There are no complete editions of any of these publications, issues are missing, and often the print quality makes some pages illegible.

September 13, 1854 BG

The Feeder dam bridge across Eel River, seven miles below this place, was burned down to the water's edge.

May 16 and June 6, 1855, and March 18, 1860 BG

The Birch Creek reservoir is cut again.

February 21, 1856 W

Legal notice of letting water power on the W & E and Slinkard's Creek dam

March 20, 1856 W

Kib Osborn, the energetic and industrious superintendent for District No. 7 informs that the water is

now being let in the canal and that navigation will open as soon as the ice runs off, which will be but a short time.

March 20, 1856 W

We are informed that five or six boats of produce are now waiting at Newberry for a rise in the river to float them off.

March 27, 1856 W

Canal is open again, navigable from this place to Terre Haute. The canal boat Golden Girl arrived at our port from Terre Haute last evening having been on her trip from Toledo since last December. A freight boat, belonging to Mr. A. Downing of Richland Furnace, also passed up the canal late in the afternoon.

April 24, 1856 W

A break in the canal below Petersburg, several days before boats can run again, says Capt. Start of the Crescent City.

May 29, 1856 W

We have had no boating on the Wabash and Erie Canal, from Evansville to this place for four or five weeks in consequence of a large break in the neighborhood of Petersburg. Owing to assurances from head-

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quarters that the canal would be in navigable order in a few days, some of our merchants and business men bought goods up the Ohio river and at Evansville, and had them shipped for this place by Canal, but just as soon as the break was completely finished, the Superintendent at Petersburg let in the water so quick as to cause its banks to give away again, to a greater extent than before. It is said that it will now take two months to make it navigable again. There is no dependence in it, and instead of being a benefit to the country, by which our merchants, mechanics, &c., could be certain of getting their goods immediately, from some cause, it is a curse to all concerned in it. Those who could make money by boating, have to lay idle nearly two-thirds of the time, owing to breaks and mismanagement. Our merchants would do well to have but little more to do with it, as they could get their goods cheaper and safer by sending wagons even to Louisville, and have them brought here when they are needed until the season for their sale has passed by.

Can there be no remedy for this? Is the Southern portion of the Wabash and Erie Canal, running through as rich a section of the State as any other, and one more in need of a channel of transportation than any other, to remain a nullity? Does the Trustees of the Canal care whether there is any business done on it or not, so they get their salaries? These are the things that ought to be seen to, for at present it is a nuisance.

June 1856

Advertisement: Hotel For Sale

The stand known as the New Hotel at Newberry, Greene County, Ind., will be sold on advantageous terms to the purchaser. It is favorably located in the flourishing town of Newberry, has all the necessary out houses, cisterns, &c., with commodious stables attached.

When its known that Newberry is the terminus of the Southern Division of the Evansville, Indianapolis, and Cleveland Straight Line Railroad, is located immediately on the Wabash and Erie Canal at the feeder dam on White river, is a beautiful and healthy location, with as good a surrounding country as any in the state, persons desirous of investing in property of this kind will see the advantage of investing here. For particulars, apply to S. L. Stoddard, Thomas Johnson.

June 5, 1856

We have reason to believe that the Canal will be in navigable order between Evansville and this place in five or six days and we hope there will be no more difficulty in getting freight this season. But we can never expect much on the Southern division of this ditch, unless the Trustees put in a Superintendent near Petersburg that has energy.

June 19, 1856 W

The Lone Star, Capt. Hubbell, will leave this port

for Newberry on the 3rd at six o'clock. Fare \$1 couple. Capt. Archer, commander of the packet Dove, will stop at the landing at Bloomfield to accommodate all who may go to that place.

June 26, 1856 Editorial

We are sorry to be always harping on this subject. But if this great ditch, leading from Toledo, on Lake Erie, to the Ohio river, and the longest line of Canal in this world, could be kept in good boating order, we would only have to say that it was one of the greatest blessings to our country of any other, as it would always have plenty to do in carrying freight from one section of country to another — thereby bringing a market at all times for the surplus products of the country when they command the best price, and giving encouragement a like to the laborer, the mechanic, and the trader. But in what condition is it at present? From Terre Haute to Evansville, it is nearly useless. There is no dependence in it. Instead of being what it would be if it were properly managed - a great public benefit - it is a curse to the country. From Eel River to Terre Haute, we presume in places there is not water enough to more than swim a duck. In the vicinity of Maysville, in consequence of neglect, carelessness, or for the want of judgment, there have been large breaks, each of which has taken two to three weeks to repair, and as soon as the water was let in, it would break again in the same place.

The Canal from Birch Creek Reservoir to Newberry is nearly always in good condition, as Mr. Osborn takes an interest in keeping it in "tolerable" order.

Our opinion is that the Trustees of the Canal are more to blame than any one else. While this ditch was under contract, they being yet poor men, were willing to work for their salaries, and for the sake of getting the canal money into their hands to speculate on, took enough interest in it to have it completed in a very imperfect manner. They then put lock tenders along the line who could occasionally open a gate when a boat happened along. But since it was completed, the Trustees have had the use of the money, and speculated on it until some of them have become immensely rich, and they now appear to take no interest in it whatsoever, so they get to use the funds.

This is the season of the year when canaling pays the best, and when the country demands it the most - but there is no doubt it is sadly neglected by those "upper tens" since they can afford to take no interest in it. This is a very dry season it is true, but it is said by boatmen that if the feeder dam on Eel river was repaired so that it would hold water, there would at this time be sufficient water to make it navigable to Terre Haute.

If the Trustees take any interest in the canal, they would have that dam made good - they would put in locktenders and pay them enough to induce them to attend to their business, and such other efficient officers

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that it would make it what it ought to be, a good paying canal.

In this vicinity, it is now worse than useless - full of green moss, all kinds of filth, and stagnant water; and unless the Trustee attend to their business, they ought to be turned out of office, and good and efficient men put in their places who have enough energy and honesty to attend to their duties.

June 26, 1856

THE CELEBRATION - We are informed that ample provisions will be made for all those who may wish to go to Newberry on the Fourth of July. The Canal boat "Lone Star" will start from this place on the evening of the 3rd of July, attended by the soul stirring notes of the Gosport Sax Horn Band. We hope our ladies will prepare such refreshments in the way of eatables as may be necessary while on the voyage, and we assure them that all arrangements will be made to render them comfortable coming or going.

July 10, 1856 W (Note the town of Kossuth never materialized.)

In July, 1856, James Montgomery Higgins Allison, entrepreneurs, advertises a town site and mill seat for sale, "one of the most valuable tracts of land in the country, consisting of 120 acres of land, on which the town of Kossuth is situated lying immediately on the Wabash and Erie Canal in Clay County..."

July 14, 1856 W

We understand that Mr. Marcus R. Holladay has sold his large and extensive warehouse on the Canal to Messrs. Shryer, Harrah & Miller of this place. This enterprising firm will now go into a heavy produce business. They have already commenced buying wheat and are now paying seventy-five cents a bushel...

July 31, 1856 W

Advertisement: Just received by canal boat Eureka 10 barrels of molasses, 8 half bbls Sugar - house ditto; sugar at cost; log, ox and breast chains. One tierce rice [42 gallons] for sale, low, by Shryer, Harrah and Miller.

July 3, 1856

The Canal and the Fourth of July - We regret very much to inform the public, and especially those who wish to go to Newberry on the 4th inst., that there is another break in the Canal, near Lattice [Lattas] Creek which cannot be repaired in time for boats to pass down. We advise those who intended to go by canal to make other arrangements as there is no dependence in it whatever.

Our Superintendent, Mr. Osborn, informs us that the break near Petersburg, which has been repaired the third time, has again broken worse than ever, and that the Trustees are now going to dig a new channel

through the bluffs. Had they done this in the building of the ditch in the first place, it would have always been in good order - boats would be passing on the Southern Division, and it would have saved an outlay of thousands annually.

March 6, 1857

The Canal - The Canal is in good navigable order now, and prospects indicate that there will be a large amount of business done on it this season. We hope it may be in navigable order hereafter, that our citizens may fully realize its great benefit.

March 6, 1857

Distinguished Arrivals. Mr. Gallagher of Washington, the new Superintendent on this Division of the W & E Canal, has been stopping at the "Franklin" for a few days. He appears to be much of a gentleman and will no doubt make an excellent office. [The Franklin House was a hotel.]

Capt. K. B. Osborn, of Petersburg, has also been in town during the past week. He says the Canal on his Division is in fine order. Hope it will remain so.

March 6, 1857

A NEW TOWN - A late number of the Petersburg Reporter says: We understand that arrangements are being made to lay out a town and sell the lots at the point where the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad crosses the Wabash & Erie Canal in Daviess County. It will be a great convenience to residents near the line of the Canal in Pike, Daviess and Greene counties who desire to ship produce to or receive goods from either Cincinnati or St. Louis. The distance per railroad being about 160 miles to either city. About 400 tons of iron from Greene county have already been trans-shipped at this point since the operation of the Canal this season. As a point for manufacturers, it offers many and superior inducements. It is located on the longest Canal in the world extended from Toledo on Lake Erie to Evansville on the Ohio river, and on the Railroad connecting Cincinnati and St. Louis, with coal in abundance and of a superior quality within two miles; extensive Iron Furnaces within 25 miles, and surrounded with a rich and improving agricultural district. What more could be asked? [This would be the town of Eldon. Which would have been located north of today's Maysville. According to a Daviess County history, there was a great sale of lots, but the town's main problem was that the Canal was just about at its end when the town was attempted.]

April 19, 1857

The Canal is now in good navigable order, and gives an earnest [word omitted] of being a very useful "institution." Boats are regularly passing and re-passing, bringing Dry Goods, Groceries, &c., &c., and taking Lumber, Wheat, Flour, Corn and produce of various

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kinds. Everything in the produce and provision line bears a good price here now, and demands the cash.

July 31, 1857

We call the attention of our readers to the sale of Lots in the town of ELDON, which takes place on the 6th of August. [Freight prices for shipping of wheat, and other merchandise by rail were given.]

These rates will enable all the dealers along the Canal to receive their Goods via the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad and re-ship at Eldon in much time and cheaper than by any other route. The low charges and the facility possessed by the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad will necessarily make Eldon the trans-shipping point for Greene county and part of Daviess. There will no doubt be more freight forwarded from and received there than at any other point on the road. Persons looking for a location either for manufacturing or for merchandizing could not find a more promising field....

Another column advertised the sale of lots in Eldon, Daviess County "at the crossing of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad, on the Wabash & Erie Canal...." "This location on two of the great arteries of trade and travel, make it a desirable point for MANUFACTORIES." Inducements were offered including the deferment of two payments to anyone who'd build a steam grist mill or steam saw mill "anywhere between the Canal and White River, within 3/4 mile of Eldon.

July 31, 1857

J. H. Turner, S. and W. McKeen of Terre Haute advertise: receiving, forwarding and commission Merchants and Dealers in all kinds of Grain, Flour, Salt &c. Wareroom near the R. R. Depot on the Canal. Particular attention paid to receiving and forwarding, by railroad, river and canal.

January 22, 1858.

Tolls - Wabash and Erie Canal Tolls reported for the month: \$100.00.

May 1858

Millinery and Mantua [cloak] Making [ad by Mrs. Crull and Mrs. Shear] The ladies advertise dressmaking, the making and trimming of bonnets in the latest styles and on hand a large and varied assortment of beautiful Ribbons, Artificials, &c. "They can always be found one door south of the Protestant Methodist Church, on the east side of the Canal, Worthington."

July 1, 1858

SMALLPOX We learn there are three cases of smallpox on board the Canal boat "John R. Taylor" about eight miles south of Worthington. Every precaution would be observed to prevent this dangerous disease from spreading over our county.

August 19, 1858

The Canal in Clay County The citizens of Lewis township of Clay county, where there has been from the first construction of the Canal a feeling of hostility to it and where its managers have had to encounter, for years, petty annoyances and serious depredations upon the work, held a meeting last week for the purpose of putting a stop to those destructive outrages. The following resolutions were adopted:

Resolved: That we will use diligence and all honorable means within our power to ferret [out] and bring to justice any and all persons guilty of trespass against said public work.

Resolved: That we are a law abiding people and will, at all times, protect our own rights and respect the rights of others.

Resolved: That each citizen of Lewis township be appointed and constituted a committee of one to investigate and ferret out any persons guilty of trespass, and we will use our best efforts to prosecute the guilty party and bring to a just punishment all such guilty persons.

August 26, 1858

The *Valley Times* of Worthington published the following "sensible and truthful article from a late number of the *Vincennes Gazette*."

The Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal have just published their annual statement. They complain that the result of the year's operations has been very unsatisfactory, attributing their misfortunes to the "very disastrous railroad competition," and the floods. The damage by the railroads is beyond all computation, we suppose, but that by the floods is set down at the round sum of \$50,000.

The aqueduct over Wea creek [near Lafayette], 140 feet long, was whole carried away, and it was at first supposed that the damage was so great that it would be advisable to abandon the whole Canal! They also lament that the available means of the trust are barely equal to the expenses and repairs, and say that they have been forced to postpone the payment of interest on the 6 percent loan until October "when they hope to be able to make the payment."

As for the boo-hoo-ing about railroad competition cutting down the revenues of the canals, it's all bosh. It hasn't been possible for the railroad to interfere with the canal; for the reason that there has been no canal to interfere with. It hasn't been in a navigable condition scarcely three days together since it was 'opened.' It has been impossible for even a crawfish to propel itself through the ditch from Evansville to Terre Haute.

The canal is a great improvement, to set up in opposition to the railroad of Indiana! Why if all the railroads that the Trustees are so lachrymose over had

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never been built, Indiana would today have been the wilderness she was forty years ago, with no cities, no canal, even no highways, no gigantic improvements, but sparse population, nothing but an overwhelming public debt and no means of paying even the interest on it.

But this canal can't pay anything more than the fat salaries of the host of officials that have been quartered upon it; can't pay any interest, and these officials — Tite Barnacles — wisely considering that such an arrangement will not be satisfactory to the holder of the 6 percent canal bonds, are alarmed at the consequences; and want the State to do something for them. Well, the State ought to do something for these worthy gentlemen if she can — kick them out of their fat offices, let them go to work on their own hook and put men in their places who have honesty, capacity and energy enough to keep the canal in working order, and not broken down political hacks who are imagined to be able to control a few politicians in some quarter of the State. This policy is ruining the canal and has damaged it more than all the floods that ever fell or all the roads ever built. Put good capable men at the head, men who will put the canal in order and keep it in order, and there can be no doubt about its having plenty of business to do. To believe that it will not, one must deny the evidence of his own senses.

August 29, 1858

We are now enjoying beautiful moonlight nights such as lovers delight in. The midnight hour often finds them arm in arm on the banks of the raging "Canawl" whispering their vows of never ending love into each others ears, while Cynthia seems to smile upon them as she looks down upon their upturned faces. Now, that will do.

November 11, 1858

...although considerable complaint has been made in the past few years about poor schools, now there is no cause for it. In Miss Whiting, who has charge of the School on the east side of the Canal, and Miss Meade, who is instructing a class at the residence of Mr. G. W. Langworthy...

November 11, 1858

The Wabash and Erie Canal is now in navigable order for its whole length, we believe, and boats arriving daily, bringing large quantities of freight. Quoted from *Terre Haute Express*.

November 11, 1858

The Canal boat "Lone Star," Capt. Jot. Kelly, arrived here on Saturday night, having on board about fifteen tons of freight for this place.

January 27, 1859

It is evident that unless the Trustees of the Wa-

bash and Erie Canal get some assistance from the state, they will be compelled to abandon the whole line from Toledo to Evansville as the expenditures are more than the revenue. In their recent Report to the Legislature, they say that the expenditures on the portion between Terre Haute and Evansville during the past year amounted to \$93,500, and on the portion north of Terre Haute, \$62,000, make the sum of \$155,000. This was in a great measure caused by the great and continual overflow last Spring, having done many serious injuries along the line. The revenues of the Canal have been cut down by Railroads running parallel with it, carrying the freight which should be taken by boats. The State is in part to blame for the damage thus done to the Canal, she has granted charters to roads which has taken a vast amount of the business property belonging to the Canal. Taking these things into consideration, it would seem that they have been extremely unfortunate. The Trustees think that an appropriation of from \$50,000 to \$80,000 a year, for a year or two, would soon put the Canal in such condition that its own resources would keep it up. We therefore think the Legislature should make an appropriation without delay, for if the Canal should go down without such fostering care as to maintain it in its infancy, it will not only be a lasting disgrace to the State, but will be a loss of from 30 to 50 percent on the price of all real estate along the line, causing serious injury to thousands and utter ruin to many worthy inhabitants, and likewise a great loss to the revenue of the State in the decline in value of a large amount of taxable property. Should the Legislature take the matter under consideration, she ought to recommend a reduction of the large salaries which are now being paid to officers along the line. They would be reduced two-thirds and men can be found who will do the business as correct and just as honest as those who are now getting such enormous salaries.

The Canal has never been of as much benefit to the country as it would have been had it always been kept in good boating order, so as to always to business that was required. But its benefits to all classes of community have been very equal, as it has given a home market for all the surplus produce of the country, and has brought in all the heavy articles our citizens demanded, at a very reasonable rate. Hence, if it is permitted to go to ruin, for want of small appropriation, the citizens of this section of Indiana will more deeply regret it than any calamity that could befall them. When they lose the Canal and feel the effects of it, in having to depend on White River as an outlet for their produce, and on New Orleans as a market, with all the additional trouble and expense of getting to market -- and when they experience the additional price they will have to pay for their salt and other heavy articles, they will be better capable of appreciating the advantage of the canal than at present.

Every effort should be used to induce the Legis-

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

lature to make such an appropriation by meetings and petitions. The people of Terre Haute and Evansville seem to take the matter quite easy, as they say nothing can induce the Legislature to do any thing for the Canal. Some talk of forming a company to put the Canal in order, but so long as there is any prospect of getting an appropriation from the State, we would earnestly recommend that policy — for while money is as hard to get as at present, it is difficult to induce men to take stock in a concern that they are not certain of reaping a good percent and quick return. But if the State refuses to assist the Trustees, we are decidedly in favor of using every effort to get up a stock company.

January 29, 1859 *Worthington Valley Times*

The Canal Gone by the Board! By a private letter from a gentleman at Terre Haute, we learn that the Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal have determined to abandon the Canal from Terre Haute to Evansville, and of course will not make any more repairs but let it go to destruction. Governor Willard in his recent message alludes to this subject as follows:

The Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal reported to me in Dec., 1857, the condition of this work. The report for the year 1858 will be laid before you at an early day which will inform you as to its present condition. I regretted to see, in their report of 1857, that its revenues were greatly diminished, and I am informed that during the past year there has been no improvement. It is, indeed, feared that the revenues will prove wholly inadequate to keep the Canal in repair, and that by them alone it cannot be maintained. I am further informed that the bondholders are unwilling to sustain the work itself, besides advancing \$80,000 for its completion.

They have informed the Board of Trustees, in the most formal manner, their determination to close the canal and to abandon the work whenever its tolls and revenues shall be inadequate to its support. The report of 1858 will disclose the action of the bondholders.

The abandonment of the work would seriously embarrass those who reside in the vicinity of the canal. If the work should be abandoned by the Trustees, there is no law under which it could be maintained.

January 29, 1859 *Worthington Valley Times*

The citizens of the different towns on the Canal between Terre Haute and Evansville are getting alarmed at the indications of an intention to abandon the Southern portion of the Canal, [and] are holding public meetings to determine what steps were necessary to prevent being shut out from all revenues of transportation to the markets of the commercial world, for their rich agricultural products. One influential citizen of Pike county writing to the *Petersburg Reporter* says: It appears by recent developments that our worst fears are about to be realized, respecting the abandonment of the Southern

division of the Wabash and Erie Canal by the Trustees. It is said that the Canal at best is poor dependence, in consequence of the uncertainty of navigation, occasioned in the first place by the frail and imperfect manner of its construction, and secondly, by the inefficiency and negligence of a majority of those who are employed to keep it in repair. But then, poor as it is, and badly as it has been managed, it is the only facility afforded us, for the transportation of produce, lumber, coal and general merchandise, except by the hazardous operation of flatboating down White River and Patoka, which is an age behind the times.

The grave question now forces itself upon us, what shall we do? Will we in Pike county quietly fall back to the "days of yore," in the conveyance of all our goods and produce in wagons and flat boats whilst the adjoining neighbors of Gibson, Knox and Daviess are every day saluted by the thunder of the "iron horse" and the rumbling of railroad cars: What is the best for us to do under these discouraging circumstances? This is an important inquiry — an interrogatory of serious import — a question which demands our calm and dispassionate consideration, followed by a unanimous response and prompt efficient action.

All will admit that it is necessary for us to do something, and that we do it speedily; for we have all learned by long experience that it is the height of folly to place any confidence in the canal. We have flattered ourselves year after year that it will work better after a while — but instead of improving it is all the time getting worse. It is in such a wretched condition that no sane man will willingly risk his property upon it to go a distance of fifty miles; if he does, there is no certainty that it will reach its intended destination in three months.

This being our situation we will be forced to seek a more convenient and reliable outlet for the various commodities which are begging for market from this county. I propose the building of a railroad from Petersburg to the most convenient point on the Ohio and Mississippi Road. The distance from Petersburg to Washington is about thirteen miles, and to Vincennes about twenty miles. It is thought by some that the route to Vincennes is the most practicable of the two, considering the ground, and the amount of stock which can be raised there over and above what we may expect to obtain in Washington.

The *Evansville Journal* says: At Newberry, a large meeting was held on the 15th inst. to take into consideration the expediency of constructing a branch railroad to Washington in Daviess county, to intersect the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad. A number of spirited speeches were made and a good deal of enthusiasm was aroused in favor of the project. Resolutions were passed declaring that the citizens of the county had lost all hope in the final completion of the Straight Line Railroad, and all confidence in the canal as a means of

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

transportation of the products of the county to a market; they were, therefore, determined to use all the influence and money in their power to construct a railroad from Newberry to Washington. Large and respectable committees were appointed to promote the object — to solicit aid — to met the citizens of Washington, and to consult and arrange the preliminaries for the enterprise. The citizens of Washington, and of Greene county generally, appear to sympathize in the movement.

These proceedings are matters of deep concern to our citizens, for though there may be no immediate prospect of getting a railroad through these fertile districts to the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad, which would carry off the important trade of Greene, Pike and Clay counties from this city to Cincinnati — the description of it suggest a real danger that is worthy of our consideration. If the Southern section of the canal were to be closed, and the people of those counties should be reduced to the primitive mode of hauling their products over (?) and roads to a point for shipment, they would inevitably go 15 or 20 miles to the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad instead of coming 100 miles to the Ohio river. If therefore the canal goes down, the trade of the important counties of Pike, Greene and Clay will be lost in a great measure to Evansville whether a branch railroad through them to Washington be ever constructed or not. Unless we can keep up the navigation of the canal, or finish the straight line railroad, the trade of the White river valley will surely desert us.

It is undoubtedly true that the trustees contemplate the abandonment of the entire line of the canal as soon as they have exhausted the land fund; and the Southern sections will be the first to be given up, as the most expensive and yielding the least revenue. It is well to consider what ought to be done in such an event. In the discussions which the subject has elicited in Pike and Greene counties we see that a suggestion is made to form a local company to aid the Trustees in keeping the divisions from Newberry to Evansville in navigable order. If they could be placed under efficient and judicious control, it is believed this part of the canal could be made to support itself; or the citizens along the line and in this city had better, it is said, make an annual contribution to maintain it than to permit it to go to decay.

February 3, 1859

The Trustees of the Canal We learn, says the *Evansville Journal* from Judge Foster who returned from Indianapolis a few days since, that the Trustees expressed a willingness, in case the State would make no appropriation for the repairs of the Canal, nor accept its transfer to the State, to deliver the Southern division into the charge of a private company who should take the entire arrangement of it. As the State will make no appropriations for it, and as the members of the Legislature have generally pledged themselves to their constitu-

ents not to take back the canal, they are afraid to receive it even as a free gift lest they might incur some implied obligations to give an equivalent for it in some shape.

It is not likely, therefore, to be accepted by the State, and the destiny of the Canal seems to be to fall into the hands of private companies.

Those interested in the Canal along the line will be strong enough to secure a sufficient amount of stock to put the Canal in good repair and keep it in good order.

February 10, 1859

The February 10, 1859 issue of the *Valley Times* of Worthington publishes "Murray's Joint Resolution on the Subject of the Wabash and Erie Canal," which states an opposition to any policy calling for legislative action before bondholders declare "in legal form" the canal's abandonment, plus a forfeit of any claim on the State "for that portion of the State's debt" to have been paid from the canal's revenues. The various resolutions began with "Whereas the threat to abandon the Canal is nothing more nor less than a not very credible avowal of their intention to violate the contract of 1846-47 between the bondholders and the State of Indiana."

In the same issue, along with another borrowed editorial is the report: "The collectors along the line of the canal have received the following order from Mr. Dowling at Terre Haute.

"Trustees Office, W. & E. Canal, Terre Haute, Jan. 12, 1859.

Dear Sir: The enclosed order of the Board is transmitted to you. The Trustees greatly regret the necessity which compels them to deny compensation for the present, and that your faithful services can no longer be required as heretofore.

Be pleased to preserve your books, parcels and papers in their present place and see that they receive no damage or injury. They are left in your hands for safekeeping. Very truly, Thos. Dowling, Recording Trustee."

February 1859

That February, 1859, R. E. Andrews of Worthington advertises: The canal is going down, but notwithstanding, I wish to buy any amount of good merchantable Wheat for which I will pay the highest market price in cash. I also wish to buy 1,000 bushels of poor or damaged Wheat, that which is not fit to grind. I will pay all it is worth.

May 19, 1859

Pursuant to previous notice, a canal meeting was held in Worthington on Saturday last. On motion, W. C. Andrews was called to the Chair and H. F. Blount chosen Secretary. George H. Start was called upon and stated that the object of the meeting which was that

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

the stockholders express their preference for persons to sit as Directors, Superintendent, and Collector. Also to appoint delegates to attend the Canal meeting at Terre Haute on the 19th inst. at which time and place the officers for this division will be elected.

This meeting concluded with resolutions offered by R. E. Andrews that five directors were a sufficient number to do all the business of the middle division of the canal; J. H. Axton and W. C. Smyth were appointed delegates to the Terre Haute convention. Aaron Hubbell, Augustus Start and K. B. Osborn were mentioned in connection with the office of Superintendent. As collectors of tolls, Wm. Wilkins and P. Burr. It was resolved that \$500 was sufficient salary for Superintendent and it was recommended that a collector of tolls at the port of Worthington be paid \$100 a year and no more, and that the collector of subscriptions and donations be paid, "not exceeding five percent for collections."

August 8, 1860

Canal navigation between Terre Haute and Evansville has ceased. A rumor is afloat that the aqueduct across the East fork of White River has given away. If such be the fact, the Canal will soon be number among "the things that were."

September 19, 1860

Report of the Canal Meeting at Evansville, September 5, 1860

Pursuant to notice a meeting of the stockholders of the Southern Canal Company was held at the Court House as above when on motion of M. W. Foster, Esq., Mr. R. Baldwin, of Francisco, was called to the Chair and W. M. Aikman chosen Secretary.

George Foster, Esq., having been appointed by the Managers to make an examination of the Canal, made the following report:

To the Stockholders of the Southern Canal Co: At a meeting of the Board of Managers, held at the Canal office in this city, August 15th, 1860, it was ordered that a meeting of the stockholders of the Southern Canal Company be called for Sept. 5th, for the purpose of obtaining an expression of their wishes regarding the future management of the Canal, and to enable them to form a better understanding of the condition of the work, the undersigned was appointed to make a personal examination of the Canal from Evansville to Newberry, in company with the superintendent, Mr. T. D. Smyth, and report at that meeting an estimate of the cost of the work necessary to put the Canal in navigable order.

Having performed that service I would respectfully beg to submit the following: That on the 3rd of August we commenced our examination; we found a full supply of water from Evansville to Port Gibson, a distance of 31 miles, at which place the Canal is supplied

by the Pigeon Reservoir; to this point we found the bank generally good and comparatively free from leaks. The locks and the aqueduct over Big Creek will need repairing — a waste weir needed fixing on the second level below the feeder, and some work must be done at the new reservoir. The bridges are generally good for present uses, except the two nearest the city. Beyond Port Gibson to Maysville there is no water.

The Canal was greatly damaged by the severe storm in June in the neighborhood of Francisco, and here we find frequent breaches from the ditches about the summit and much earth washed in. The Patoka aqueduct is very dangerous; it may be repaired to stand some time at the estimate we make, but we regard it as uncertain and about the worst place on the line; we would not recommend much expenditure here, as it cannot be done to an advantage, the entire structure will have to be rebuilt shortly.

We find some breaks at Hosmer to be repaired, and Patoka Summit will need some cleaning. The bluffs above Petersburg have slid into the canal in some places, and have reduced the size so much that a sufficiency of water will not pass to supply the canal below; some places will have to be removed. The aqueduct at White River will need some repairs, and when completed will make this work apparently secure. The Superintendent has expended on this structure during the early summer about \$1,500, which has done it much good. A break occurred at the culvert above Maysville which will have to be repaired; beyond this place the Canal is in comparatively good order, with the exception of a few bars which can be removed at small expense.

We find the dam at Newberry looking well; the abutments but little worse than for some time past. The bridges from Port Gibson to Hosmer are in passable order, but beyond with one or two exceptions, are dangerous.

In making estimates for the necessary work, we do not include the bridges as long as they stand they must do; it will be entirely beyond the means of the managers to rebuild them. The locks are in bad order, but we think at our estimate they will last a year or so longer. The estimates for the work necessary to put the Canal in navigable order include only those most pressing; other work is needed which can be done by the boat force at a small expense after navigation is resumed, and which we estimate can be more than paid for from tolls and other revenues of the Company.

Respectfully,
Geo. Foster

[Foster's report on the following page] which on motion was received.

Mr. M. A. Lawrence, President of the Board of Managers, submitted the following financial exhibit: [This is the second chart on the following page.]

The report indicated that the Middle Division was unable to pay its debt which deducted from assets

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Estimate of cost of work required to put the Canal in navigable order from Evansville to Newberry, a distance of 95 miles:

Repairing 7 leaks to Port Gibson.....	\$200.00
Repairing Big Creek Aqueduct.....	100.00
Making Water Weir.....	100.00
Work at Reservoir.....	100.00
Earth work to Port Gibson.....	100.00
Cleaning out bars and ditching at Summit.....	400.00
Repairing Feeder at Reservoir.....	50.00
Clearing bars from Francisco to Dongola.....	100.00
Repairing Patoka Aqueduct.....	350.00
Repairing banks at Hosmer.....	100.00
Cleaning Patoka Summit.....	100.00
Earth work at White River Bluffs.....	200.00
Repairing White River Aqueduct.....	350.00
Break at Maysville.....	100.00
Repairing 9 locks to Newberry.....	400.00
Repairing tow path Bridges.....	100.00
Total.....	\$2,850.00

Above: Judge George Foster's report
Below: M. A. Lawrence's report

Statement of assets and liabilities of the Southern Canal Company:

Assets:	
Balance of stock considered available.....	\$2,500.00
Balance due from Northern Division.....	44.91
Balance due from Middle Division (unavailable).....	343.09
Water rents due 1st of October.....	710.00
Value boat, tools &c.....	1,200.00
Total.....	4,798.00
Liabilities:	
Canal Script outstanding.....	445.00
Individual indebtedness.....	472.00
Canal Lease.....	500.00
Bonds for boats, stock, &c.....	1,995.00
Balance.....	1,385.91

available. The total estimate for necessary repairs to get the canal in immediate order is \$2,850.00, leaving a deficit of \$1,807.18 which "must be raised by additional subscription." Judge Foster then offered the following resolution: "Resolved that the management of the Southern Division of the Wabash & Erie Canal proceed without delay to collect all delinquency and stock uncalled for and at the same time solicit additional stock or donations to put the Canal in repair, in accordance with the estimates here submitted and that they be empowered to appoint, at the different points on the Canal, assisting committees to solicit further subscriptions for this purpose; which was adopted. The meeting was adjourned to meet on October 10, 1860 to elected manag-

ers for the ensuing year.

April 6, 1861 *White River Gazette*

The businessmen and citizens of Worthington generally are greatly interested in keeping our Canal in navigable condition from this place to Terre Haute and from present indications they are going to succeed in doing so.

On last Tuesday night week a meeting of our citizens was held to take the matter under consideration and, if possible, to hit upon some plan by which to keep the Canal up. It was thought by some present that a company could be formed to take the Canal and get it in order receiving the tolls arising therefrom for their pay. A committee of three, consisting of S. B. Harrah, R. C. Howe, and R. E. Andrews, were appointed to visit Terre Haute and consult with the people of that city in regard to the matter.

On last Tuesday evening the citizens of Worthington met together to hear the report of said Committee. They reported rather favorable. The citizens of Terre Haute agree to take the canal from the Reservoir to that city and keep it in navigable condition for the period of two years, provided the citizens of this place would obligate themselves to take it from here to the Reservoir.

Some five or six hundred dollars is due from the present company to laborers on the canal, and a committee was appointed to call upon the public and solicit donations, so that the old debts might all be settled immediately. Mr. Aaron Hubbell, we understand, will take the canal from this place to the Reservoir, and obligate himself to keep it in good repair for two years, at two hundred dollars a year, together with the revenue arising from the collection of tolls on the Division extending from this place to the Reservoir.

A committee was also appointed to confer with the citizens of Newberry and Bloomfield, and urge upon them the importance of their uniting together and keeping the canal up from this place to Newberry. The people of this place are quire anxious that navigation should be kept upon to that point, and we trust that our two sister towns will take immediate steps to keep the canal south of us in good navigable condition.

April 12, 1861 Advertisement

The fast running Packet, "JOE BLAKE" will make regular trips three times every week between Worthington and Terre Haute, during the season, if the Canal is kept in good order. Arrangements have been made to have everything comfortable for passengers.

Order for freight will be promptly attended to, free of charge.

Fare as low as by any other line.

Apply on board of boat, or at Jesse Crull's store in Worthington.

ISAAC HUBBELL, Captain

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

November 28, 1861

The canal boat "Joe Blake," Capt. Cochran, arrived at this place on Saturday loaded "down to the guards." She had on board 165 barrels of Salt, together with a large lot of Dry Goods, Groceries, Leather, etc. She left for Terre Haute on Tuesday with 160 bls. Of flour and 600 bushels of wheat.

company are building several new boats and many individuals are also building boats which shows the canal navigation is to be a permanent thing from this time for the next ten years at least.

A daily line of canal boats will commence running from Terre Haute to Toledo on the first of April.

January 16, 1862

The canal is frozen up.

October 23, 1862

Navigation on the canal between this place and Terre Haute will be open some time this week. Boats are expected down every day.

February 13, 1862

STEAMBOAT NAVIGATION ON WHITE RIVER

As there is but little dependence to be put in the Canal, we think it advisable for our citizens to take under consideration the navigation of White River by small steamboats. The dam at Newberry could be torn out and the River made navigable as far up as Point Commerce for less money than it takes to keep the Canal in repair between this place and Terre Haute. The *Gazette* goes on to E. H. Sabin who promotes steamboats, "all the rage now" ...and names the instances of boats in operation including "another runs up the East Fork of White River from the Railroad to Petersburg, Maysville, Portersville and even up the Shoals...Another from the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad to Newberry in our own county...we need another to run from Newberry to Worthington, or else the locks at Newberry repaired so the same boat could make the whole trip. The repair could be made for about one hundred dollars. Wouldn't this be a better investment for us than our annual donation to the Canal, which is generally out or order when most needed? By the process —we would have regular, reliable, and cheap method of shipping our products at least nine months in the year...There is a steamboat, 80 feet long, in good condition, only six months old, for sale at Hazelton. It can be bought for less than it used to take to buy a Canal boat. Doesn't somebody want to invest?

January 23, 1863

We learn that a company from Ohio are talking about taking the Canal from Terre Haute to Evansville and putting it through repair. We hope it to be true.

[Steamboating the White River was unsuccessful when it was found most of the river was not navigable. However, a Worthington merchant, later of Bloomfield, Captain M.H. Shryer purportedly operated a steamboat called the "Richland" from Point Commerce in Greene County to Evansville]

April 23, 1863

CANAL MEETING We understand there is to be a meeting at this place of the citizens on Saturday next, at 3 o'clock, P.M. for the purpose of devising some plan to put in repair and in usable manner, the Canal from this place to Terre Haute.

A matter of so much importance should call together all the citizens — farmers, mechanics, and business men of Greene county, and many from Owen and Clay.

It is needless to say that all will soon see the want of a means of transportation. A large proportion of the people already feel it in the diminished prices of agricultural products as well as the great inconvenience of getting supplies by wagon only.

Turn out, every man, and put your hands to the work. Do not let the Canal go down from want of the assistance it is in your interest to give.

March 13, 1862

Navigation on the Canal between this place and Terre Haute has opened unusually early this Spring. Several boats have arrived and departed this week.

May 28, 1863

This old ditch has become a complete nuisance and if it has been entirely abandoned, why not fill it up? It is full of grass, rotten logs, dead hogs, &c., and if something is not done with it, pretty soon it will cause a good deal of sickness.

March 13, 1862

CANAL NAVIGATION The Wabash and Erie Canal, from Terre Haute to Toledo, has been leased to responsible parties for the term of ten years, and is now being put in permanent repair, and on the first of April will be in as good a condition as it has ever been. The

February 7, 1866 *Worthington Gazette*

THE CANAL FOREVER ABANDONED The *Terre Haute Express* says:

The proposition to repair the lower canal and put it in navigable order from this city to Evansville, we learn has been abandoned.

We do not believe it was ever intended to repair the canal, and the people down in the State of Greene are of the opinion that the project was gotten up for the purpose of injuring the prospects of the Indianapolis & Vincennes Railroad. Failing in their object, the Company has abandoned the enterprise.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

We presume the people along the old ditch will now go to work and burn up the locks, drain off the water, or fill it up, so that the health of the country may be benefited thereby.

April 25, 1866 *Worthington Gazette*

The *Lafayette Journal* reports that the Wabash and Erie Canal is about to become a defunct institution. The late floods have so much damaged it that it is thought that it will have to be abandoned entirely from Logansport southward. The expenditures for repairs and salaries from April 1, 1859 to January 1, 1866 were \$416,577.47. The receipts during that time were \$378,283.91 making a loss of \$38,293.55.

May 16, 1866

The Trustees of the Wabash & Erie Canal have given out the contract from draining the [Splunge Creek] reservoir. The contractor get \$100 and all the fish. It is estimated that there is fish enough in this body of water to furnish the State of Indiana for three months. There are 4,000 acres of land covered with water, and as soon as it is all drained, it will be offered for sale.

1873 Probably late summer or early autumn

We are pleased to see that an effort is now being made to drain the water out of the old canal and otherwise clean up the filthy portions of our town. This is a move in the right direction and we trust the work will go on.

PACKET ELIZA - CAPTAIN WEBB

The following is from the boat's book and gives insight into passengers, freight and costs of operating a canal boat.

Date	Passengers Names	Where from	Where to	No. Miles	Cr (Receipts)
<u>Packett Eliza first Trip Webb Capt</u>					
Sept 29th 1850	Mr Jewel & lady	Terre Haute	Worthington	84 (2 people)	3 00
Sept 30th	Mr Jewel & Wife	Worthington	Terre Haute	84 (2 people)	3 00
	freight	"	"	168	<u>85</u>
					\$6.85
<u>2nd Trip</u>					
Oct 2nd	I Graham	Terre Haute	Lockport [Riley]	12	50
	Roach	" "	"	12	50
	T Hamilton	Lockport [Riley]	Worthington	30	1 00
	Roy	"	"	<u>30</u>	1 00
				84	
	Burnham	freight 5126 @ 16 2/3			8 54
	Stewards	freight			1 00
	2 meals				<u>50</u>
					\$13.04
Oct 4th	S. Ridle	Terre Haute	Worthington	42	1 50
	T Ridler	" "	"	42	1 50
	Judge Bowin	& freight	Resovor (reservoir)	22	3 00
	F P Toappin	1 Barrell soap	Worthington		25
	Noea	1 Bll Salavatus& secd	Johnstown		50
		1 " Mackerall	Pt. Commerce		50
	E Ersham	2 " Whis & salt	Worthington		1 35
	Mecanna	Lockport [Riley]	"		1 00
	Cpt. Sibley	Worthington	Terre Haute		<u>1 50</u>
					\$11.10
Oct 7th	J Riley				25
	Mr. Ball	T Haute	Worthington		1 50
	1 Bl Whisk				<u>50</u>
					Whiskey
					\$2.25

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

		Packet Eliza Dr (Expenses)	
Sept 29th	Out fit at Lockport [Riley] Sundries	9 21	
Oct 1th	Bill at Potters	4 60	
	Broom, Table Spoons plank	2 00	
	Potatoes horse Collar & Meat	<u>1 70</u>	
		\$17.51	
Oct 2	Clearance	6 31	(Clearance = Boat Toll)
	Meat, Butter, Eggs & Sponge	90	
	Candles & Meat	35	
	Butter, Eggs and potatoes	<u>60</u>	
		\$8.16	
Oct 4th	Clearance	2 80	
	Bill for horses 2 night at Cashis	80	
	1 Looking glass & Comb	1 00	
	Meat, sniffers & asfardy	<u>1 20</u>	(Asafetida was a bad smelling gum resin used to treat/prevent diseases)
		\$5.80	
Oct 7th	Clearance	2 30	
	Provisions @ T. Haute	3 05	
	" @ Lockport	<u>8</u>	
		\$6.43	(apparently he made a mistake)
Oct 12th	Clearance	3 78	
	Provisions	4 57	
	Boats stores, venison & Potatoes	1 00	
	1 Cheese 37 lb @ 8	2 96	
	1/2 Bbl Sugar 127 @ 8	10 21	
	2 lb Tea @ 70	<u>1 40</u>	
		\$23.92	
Oct 23rd	Clearance	6 07	
	Provisions at T Haute	3 10	
	33 ob. Beef @ 3	1 16	
	Drayage	<u>2 00</u>	
		\$12.35	
Oct 25th 1850	Clearance	6 25	
	Calico & cotton batting for comforts	6 33	
	Cash Paid Georg Burnet	3 00	
	Provisions at Terre Haute	3 25	
	Shipwreck & damage on goods	7 00	
	Burnham 22 Bbl Salt & 200 per Bbl lost	49 00	
	Wm Jewel 22 Bbl Salt @ 200 per Bbl lost	56 00	
	1 sack coffee for Johnstown	25 00	
	Casting & Stove pipes @ Graves	<u>5 00</u>	
		\$155.83	(apparently he made another mistake)
October 28	Clearance	3 46	
28th	Tow Line at 18 3/4	5 25	
	Venison ham	60	
	Wood Black Smith Bill @ Worth ^(ington)	<u>1 20</u>	
		\$10.41	
Oct 30th	Clearance	4 01	

CANAWLERS AT REST

WILLIAM JAMES BALL

b. Jan. 1, 1814

d. Apr. 21, 1874

By Carolyn I. Schmidt

Photos of the Ball plot stone and head stones by B. Michael McCormick.



William J. Ball was born in Waterfront, Virginia. He became an engineer. After the Indiana legislature ordered the completion of the Wabash & Erie Canal to Terre Haute in February of 1842, it was W. J. Ball who estimated that it would cost \$83,160.84 to complete the work. He reported his findings to a committee of Terre Haute businessmen, who were promoting the completion of the canal eastward. His estimate was for building the locks with timber, not stone as was used on Eastern canals.

In 1847 Indiana Governor James Whitcomb formally turned over the Wabash & Erie Canal to Charles Butler, Thomas H. Blake and Nathan B. Palmer. These trustees appointed W. J. Ball the resident engineer of the southern division. Their other appointments included Jesse Lynch Williams, who was Ball's brother-in-law, chief engineer; Chauncey Carter superintendent of the western division; Stearns Fisher superintendent of the eastern division; and toll collectors for Fort Wayne, Lagro, Logansport, Lafayette, and Covington.

The year of his appointment W.J. Ball and his wife Julia Sterritt Creighton Ball moved to Terre Haute, Indiana. He purchased a frame house on the corner of South 6th and Poplar streets. There they reared their children William Creighton Ball, Susan W. Ball, Spencer F. Ball and Julia Ball.

Around 1849 citizens of Jeffersonville, Indiana, stirred up new interest in the earlier proposed projects of building a canal around the "Falls of the Ohio" on the

Indiana side of the Ohio River. Three attempts were made in 1805, 1817-19, and 1824-25, but all failed. In 1849 it was W. J. Ball who reported that a survey showed a ship channel as large as two hundred feet wide and about two miles long could be built for \$688,000. The Indiana Canal Company went so far as to dig the first shovel of dirt, but again that is as far as the project went.

The following incident, which includes Ball, shows how difficult it was to travel by roads in the mid-1800s. William J. Ball was summoned before the federal Grand Jury in March 1851 along with Col. Edmunds and Tom Bourne. They had to go from Terre Haute to Indianapolis by stagecoach. They left Terre Haute at seven o'clock in the evening. When the sun came up the following morning they found themselves at the foot of Blake's Hill, which was located only about three miles out of town. The stage continued on and they ate breakfast at Col. Hoskin's at Cloverland. When they reached Manhattan, near Greencastle, they received their second relay of fresh horses. They didn't arrive at Indianapolis until the next night. When they went before the Grand Jury judge, they were fined for being late. They said that the 72 mile journey had taken 73 hours. They proved to the judge that their late arrival was not their fault by sending for the stagecoach driver, who produced the waybill. The judge subsequently remitted their fines. Their trip back to Terre Haute took 63 hours. Traveling by canal boat was a smoother and sometimes faster way to travel. Had the Cross Cut Canal and the Central Canal been completed, W. J. might have arrived on time.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

When the Balls became wealthier, W. J. purchased Spring Hill Farm, once the home of William C. Linton. There he built a mansion. After living in it for some time, he traded it to Richard W. Thompson. This palatial mansion was moved to South 7th and Park Street. Later it was used as a fraternity house.

W. J. Ball also served as the chief engineer of the Terre Haute Drawbridge Company and the Terre Haute & Indianapolis (Richmond) Railroad. It was not uncommon for men, who had built the canals, to later build railroads. An example is Jesse Lynch Williams, who was the chief engineer of all of Indiana's canals and then built railroads.

W. J. Ball's children became outstanding citizens of Terre Haute:

William Creighton Ball and John S. Dickerson purchased the **Terre Haute Gazette** in 1872. W. C. Ball became the publisher. His residence was at 1138 S. 5th Street in Terre Haute.

Susan Williams Ball (November 27, 1851-1921) was born in Terre Haute and baptized at St. Stephens Episcopal Church. She was the secretary for the Terre Haute Decorative Arts Society, which was founded in 1882 for the self-education and cultural enrichment of women. There she showed her flair for writing. She went to work in the 1890s as the society editor for the **Terre Haute Gazette**. Beginning on October 1, 1904, she wrote "Women's World," a column for the **Saturday Spectator**, a weekly publication. The column ran for fourteen years. In it she advocated women's suffrage and equality for women. Some of her columns critiqued Terre Haute culture while others described her trips in the United States. Susan did not marry. She lived in the home of her brother W. C. Ball. In March 2000 she was feted as Terre Haute's "Woman in History."

Spencer F. Ball bought out Dickerson's interests in the **Terre Haute Gazette** in 1874 and joined with W.

C. Ball in the firm of W. C. Ball & Co. The Ball brothers changed the paper's allegiance to the Democratic Party.

Julia Ball married Allen Harry Donham on June 2, 1892. They resided at 1201 S. Sixth Street. Around 1902 they built a summer home on Honey Creek in Allentown and worked at improving it. Her husband died at the age of 53 from appendicitis and peritonitis.

William J. Ball died in Terre Haute, IN on April 20, 1874. He is buried in Terre Haute's Woodlawn Cemetery in Division 48, Lot 22, recorded in Bk 8.

Julia Sterritt Creighton Ball, who was born in Chillicothe, OH on November 10, 1821, died in Terre Haute, IN, on June 24, 1877. She is buried in the family plot next to her husband William J. Ball.

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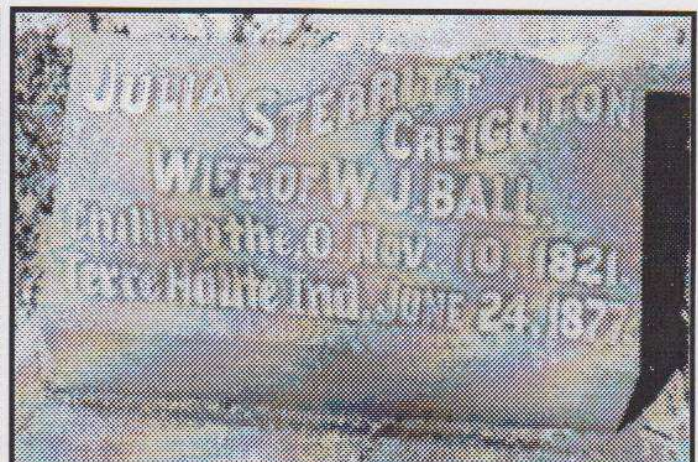
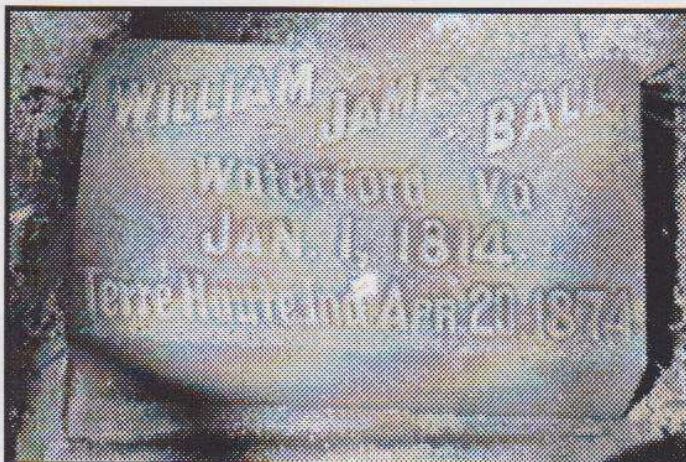
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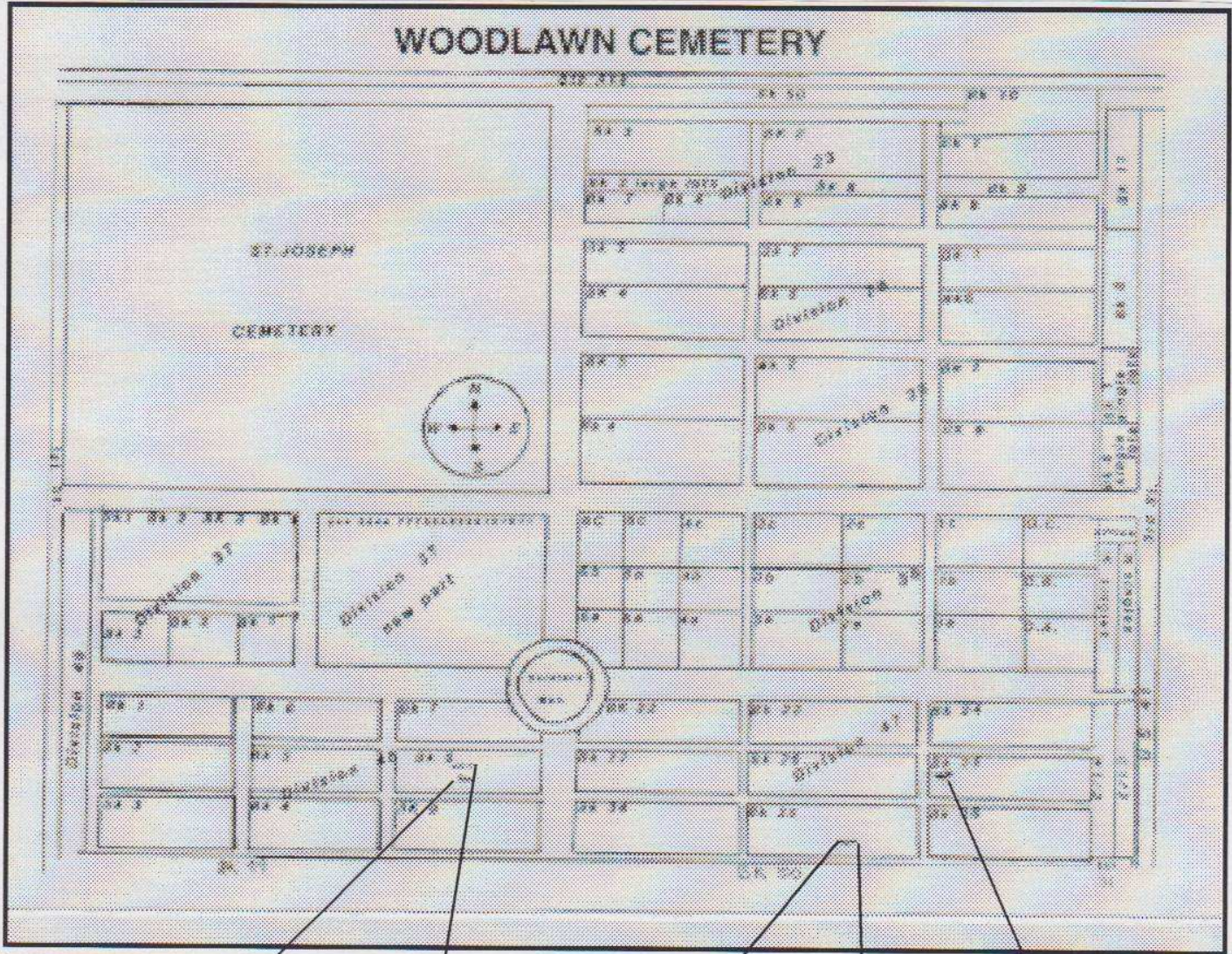
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ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

WOODLAWN CEMETERY



WOODLAWN CEMETERY, U.S. 41 (3RD STREET), TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA
CANAWLERS

William J. Ball
Div. 48 Lot 22 Bk 8

Edward A. Hannegan
Div. 48 Lot 18 Bk 8

William C. Linton
Div. 47 Lot 23 Bk 35

Thomas H. Blake
Div. 47 Lot 23 Bk 35

Thomas Dowling
Div. 47 Lot 5 Bk 25

CANAWLERS AT REST

ANDREW DOWNING

b. 1809

d. 1872

By Carolyn I. Schmidt

Andrew Downing, was of Scotch-Irish descent. His father Michael Downing was born in Ireland in the 1750s and emigrated from Cork to America during the time of the Revolutionary War. Hoping to escape the oppression of the British government he enlisted in a Virginia regiment and fought for seven years under General "Mad Anthony" Wayne, who he loved and trusted. He endured much adversity. Michael was with Wayne at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in Ohio in 1794. They used bayonets and bullets to kill the Indians hiding amid trees blown down by a tornado. He also was in Harmar's Defeat on the Maumee River in 1790.

Later Michael served for five years in the regular army during the War of 1812. He also was a soldier along the frontier on the Ohio River. He was at Fort Massac below the mouth of the Tennessee River on the Ohio River in what is now Illinois. He carried the mail from the Fort to the Falls of the Ohio (Louisville, Kentucky) by foot passing through dangerous wilderness.

We do not know when Michael Downing married Mary Anne Wells. However in 1818 he put his family on a flatboat on the Kanawha River in (West) Virginia and went to Louisville, Kentucky. From there they moved by land to Washington County, Indiana and settled on Walnut ridge. In 1832 he moved to Bloomfield in Greene County where Andrew, his third son, was living and lived there for many years. He then moved to Jackson County, where he died in 1852. He has monuments in two cemeteries. One is in Downing Cemetery, Grassy Fork Township, Jackson County, Indiana, and the other in Grandview Cemetery, Bloomfield, Greene County, Indiana.

Michael and Mary Anne Downing's children were Alexander; John; Andrew (our subject born in 1809);

Paul, who was a great flatboat pilot; Albert and Gallatin, who were twins; and Peggy.

Andrew Downing came to Bloomfield about 1829. He was a shoemaker for awhile and then began handling liquors, groceries, sugar, coffee, molasses, etc. in a merchandising establishment. Business prospered. He purchased a lot prior to 1835. He built the first brick house in town. In 1831 he built and ran the first flatboat out of Bloomfield on the nearby White River.

While on the river in 1832 Andrew came down with cholera and brought the disease back to Bloomfield. Thomas Warnick the Greene County clerk caught it from him. The doctor treating Warnick gave him nothing but calomel used for the treatment of worms and not the proper treatment at all. When Andrew heard of this he rode as fast as his horse could go to reach the cold collapsed form of Warnick. Andrew quickly put on a big kettle of water filled with roasting ears. When the water boiled and the corn was very hot, he wrapped cloths around the ears, put bundles of hot corn all around Warnick's body, and held the covers in place throughout the agonizing reaction. It is said that when the blood goes back into the limbs it feels like hot needles being inserted into the body. Andrew's quick work saved Warnick's life.

Andrew operated the flatboat and continued to operate his merchandising establishment until 1837 at which time a contract was let for a brick court house. The builder absconded with the first one thousand dollars. Andrew, being one of the sureties on the contract, had to build the court house. He hired William Eveligh (Eveleigh) of Louisville, Kentucky, to be the boss carpenter for the building. It was finished in 1839. It was forty or fifty feet square and overlooked a gully to its south. Almost the entire town was built around the public square located on its other three sides.

When William Eveligh came to Bloomfield, he brought his family of three brothers and two sisters with him. They had just arrived from Ireland and the girls were very beautiful. Andrew and M. H. Shryer, both widowers, were struck by them. When the court house was finished, the first event held in the new court room was a huge ball. When everything was magnificently arranged and the musicians in their places, Andrew and Shryer stood up with the Eveligh sisters and were married in front of all present. Andrew married Eliza Eveligh.

Although a website by Cathy Wayman lists Andrew and Eliza (Everleigh) having five children (William A., born in 1840; John W., born in 1851; Louis, born in 1859, Lillie, born in 1864; and Josie, born in 1872) the dates of his children's birth seem very far apart with the last child being born the year Andrew died. The names

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

of these children and times of their birth are in question. It also says he was married to Mary F. She could have been his first wife.

In *Biographical Memoirs of Greene County, Indiana With Reminiscences of Pioneer Days* it says Andrew set up his oldest son, John, in merchandising in the old brick block. This was the largest of the merchandizing buildings built by Andrew as his business grew. It was located a block north of the square in Bloomfield.

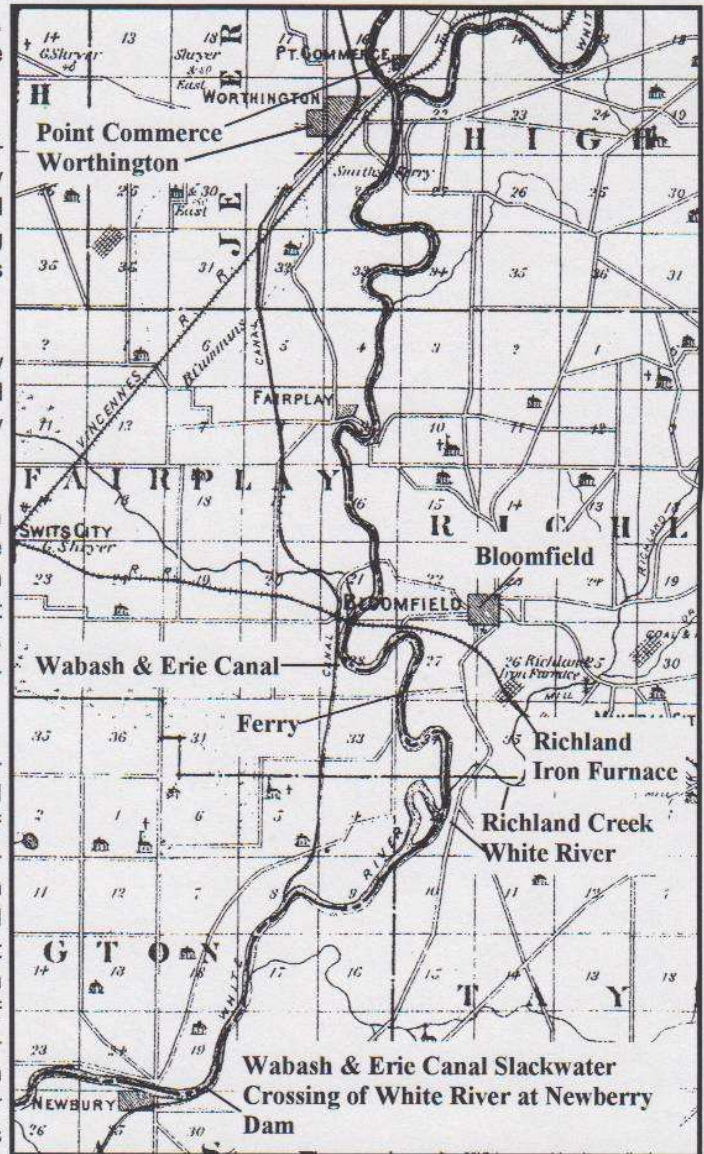
By 1840 Bloomfield merchants including Andrew had a sales base of over 400 people, who not only lived in town but came from distances around town. Andrew was becoming wealthy.

When iron was discovered a short distance from Bloomfield, Andrew's attention was piqued. The iron ore from Ore-branch of Plummer's Creek formed a bench on each side of a ravine that was about nine feet deep. It was block ore. Other ore was discovered in pockets along Indian Creek and Richland Creek. This would supply all the ore necessary to operate an iron furnace.

Andrew knew there was a demand for iron products for farm and household needs. Items settlers had brought with them were deteriorating. He had plenty of money from his other businesses and saw the opportunity to make even more. He decided to set up an iron furnace to make pig iron on a bluff overlooking Richland Creek about a mile southeast of Bloomfield. It was built in 1840-41 and named Richland Iron Furnace. He built a loading dock for the pig iron. It stood on the bank of Richland Creek at the foot of a steep hill below the furnace. It was built by setting huge stones into a wooden crib made of twenty-inch squared timbers held together with long, thick iron spikes made at the furnace. Teams hauled ore up the hill to the furnace and returned with cooled iron pigs to be stacked on the loading dock for shipment.

At first only pig iron was made at the furnace. Then Andrew added a shop to cast stoves, plows, kettles, farm castings, mill machinery and all kinds of domestic hollow ware. It produced the best quality of mill-iron.

As business increased Andrew hired more men. Around 1844-45 the furnace was enlarged with the addition of better machinery and a blast furnace. It had an engine, boilers, and a stack about forty-five feet high and nine feet across the boshes. The blowing-cylinders were forty-two inches in diameter and had a six foot stroke. Charcoal was used for fuel producing a hot-blast for smelting. It could turn out about nine tons of pig-iron in a twenty-four hour day operation.



A portion of an 1876 map of Greene County, Indiana, from *The Historical Atlas of the State of Indiana* by Baskin, Forster & Co.

To supply the furnace, iron ore in stone like chunks was taken from the hills and hauled by horse and mule team over what is now called the Iron Mountain Road. Trees were felled in the nearby wilderness and turned into charcoal at various pits nearby to fuel the furnace. This process is described in the *History of Greene County* as follows:

"About forty cords of wood were cut into lengths of about four feet, and on a level piece of land were stood up on end around a central cavity which was filled with kindling materials until a space thirty or forty feet in diameter was covered, and on the top of this another layer of the wood was stood and still another on top of this until the pit had the shape of a large flat bowl. Leaves were then spread entirely over this,

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

and then on the leaves was placed a layer of earth five or six inches deep, with a few air holes on the sides, and an opening at the top where the kindling below was lighted. It required an experienced collier to manage the pit—to know how to regulate the air supply, to know when the wood had all been suitably charred and to know how to smother the fire in this pit. Some twenty or thirty men were constantly at work in this branch of the business cutting and hauling the wood, forming and burning the pits, and hauling the charcoal to the furnace.

"All this was under the superintendence of a boss, as was also the mining of the iron ore. The bosses usually took contracts of supplying the coal or the ore, and hired and controlled the hands under them, and were paid for the coal or the ore—4 cents a bushel for the coal at the pit or 7 cents delivered at the furnace. There were sub-bosses throughout the system.

"The ore was furnished in the same manner by the ton usually, and came out in chunks like stone. This was reduced, by heat before being used in the furnace, to small pieces like nuts."

There were three main divisions at Richland Furnace. One cut the wood, made the charcoal and took it to the furnace to keep it burning. Another mined the ore and transported it to the furnace. The third worked in the mill to produce the pig iron and iron products.

The process of producing pig iron is described by Tom Thomas in an 1976 article in Bloomfield's *Evening World* as follows:

"Pig iron is the first form of useful iron and is derived by melting iron ore in a furnace. Also melted in the furnace is an agent for producing heat, limestone for use as a purifying agent or flux for separating the iron from the impurities when in a molten condition.

"The furnaces used to smelt the ore for the purpose of separating the iron from the impurities are called blast furnaces because air under pressure is forced through the mass of ore, fuel and flux within the furnace to cause the separation. The molten iron then settles to the lower portion of the furnace while the impurities or slag being lighter, rise above the iron.

"When it is determined that the separation of the iron and impurities is completed and that the mass inside the furnace is satisfactorily liquified, a hole, called the cinder notch or slag notch, just above the top of the molten iron is opened up and the molten slag is drained off for discard. The hole through which the molten iron is extracted is then opened and the iron is run into prepared molds which were made in sand, in the early

days, in what was known as the pig bed. The solidified iron has always been called pig iron and the waste product called slag."

It is hard to imagine transporting such a great weight as that of pig iron or the iron products through a wilderness with almost impassable roads. Much of the iron first produced was hauled on wagons pulled by horse teams to Louisville, Kentucky. This route became one of the roads into Bloomfield. In the beginning the teamsters were paid five dollars per ton for the 100 mile journey.

Since Richland Iron Furnace employed a number of workmen, the little town of Furnace rapidly sprang up around it. Farmers in the area sold their produce in the village. Eventually the town had a post office, bank, a company store, houses and Furnace Mill. The mill probably was the largest in Greene County.

After the furnace had been operating several years, M. H. Shryer, who Andrew had previously aided when Shryer's business failed; William Eveleigh; and William Mason went into business with Andrew. Shortly thereafter they purchased a steamboat and called it "The Richland." Shryer managed the boat and was called Captain. They used it to transport iron and produce down the White River to the Wabash River, then to the Ohio River. They also made additional money by shipping agricultural products for local farmers. For awhile other steamboats came up the river to pick up loads of pig iron and the furnace did fairly well.

In the early 1850s the Wabash & Erie Canal was dug through Greene County. Lock #57, a timber crib lock with a 7 foot lift, was built between the Bradford Ferry roads 126 and 127 in Section 33 of Fairplay Township about a mile and a half south of the road to Bloomfield (SR 54, US 231). An epidemic of cholera struck the camp of the Irish laborers and took many of their lives. Their bodies were buried on a bluff near an Indian mound at Bloomfield.

In 1851 the first canal boat floated by Bloomfield, but the Wabash & Erie Canal was not opened all the way from Toledo, Ohio, on Lake Erie to Evansville, Indiana, on the Ohio River until 1853. Although the canal was only a few miles from Richland Furnace, it was on the west side of the White River west of Bloomfield. To reach the canal the heavy iron was put on boats at Richland Creek, floated to the White River and down to the canal slackwater at Newberry. From there canal boats carried it to Evansville for use there or it was trans-shipped to river boats at the Ohio River. This was the best means of transportation for the iron thus far and the canal boats continuously conveyed iron products to the South.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

Andrew owned two canal boats. His boat captains were Paul and Alexander Thompson. One of the boats was wrecked at the Richland cut-off where its remains were imbedded in the canal bank. Other canal boats were owned by Start & Co., Worthington flour merchants, and by Peter C. VanSlyke, Bloomfield's shipper of grain and other products.

In 1855 Andrew founded Downing's Bank of Indiana at Furnace. It was located in a little stone building built by Mr. Davis, a refugee from Kentucky and cousin of Jeff Davis. It issued currency up to \$5,000.00 in \$1.00 and \$20.00 bills.

Around 1855-56 all the partners decided to leave the furnace except for Andrew, but business went on as usual with John Eveleigh and M. H. Shryer as bookkeepers. Andrew soon found three wealthy partners — E. J. Peck and A. L. Voorhees, both from Indianapolis, and Chauncey Rose, who founded Rose Polytechnic Institute, Rose Orphanage, and Rose Dispensary in Terre Haute. They began doing business on a larger scale having brought more capital into the business.

Henry Irons, an expert manager from an iron furnace in Kentucky, took charge of the furnace in 1856 and it grew until 120 men were working there. Their wages were \$1.00 per day, a wonderful salary for the 1850s. Pig iron had gone up in price and was selling for forty dollars per ton in Louisville. Plans were laid to start other furnaces. Everything began to prosper with Irons in charge.

With the increased capital additional real estate was acquired and the mill enlarged. A new 100-horsepower engine was added. The town of Furnace flourished with its bank, charcoal burning kilns, distillery, grist mill, hollow-ware factory, iron smelting plant, ore mining equipment, and store.

By 1858 the company was reclaiming forty-five percent iron from the ore. A handsome profit of \$2,000 was made. Some said the company held \$200,000.00 in property by this time.

From 1851 to 1859 business on the canal was fairly good, but often it had problems with the depth of water. Although Andrew's businesses always seemed to get bigger and better, doom loomed ahead.

The Wabash & Erie Canal near Bloomfield operated from Worthington south to Evansville for about 6 years and from Worthington to the north toward Terre Haute about 10 years. Upon the suspension of the improvement on the south end of the Wabash & Erie Canal by the Canal Company, all means of transportation were cut off except by wagon team. Where before the canal

was built boats could use the White River, but once the slackwater dam at Newberry had been constructed for the canal, the river was no longer accessible to steamboats. When iron commanded a good price, it was feasible to haul it thirty miles to a railroad, but this was not always the case. Andrew had to stop the iron business in which he had put all his energy for about eighteen years.

Richland Furnace soon blew out and was never rekindled. Downing's bank closed its doors, families moved away, and all the associated industries were shut down.

An interesting court case was tried over who had the right to the mast on 200 acres owned by Andrew Downing & Company in 1855. At the time mast, the nuts from trees, was an important and easy way of feeding hogs. Major Livingston drafted a complaint stating "that the plaintiff was the owner of a certain tract of land in Center Township containing two hundred acres, and was agent for a large body of land belonging to Andrew Downing & Company, and in possession of it, and entitled to the annual mast growing thereon, all of which was covered with a heavy and large growth of timber, consisting of white oak, black oak, pin oak, burr oak, post oak, chestnut oak, chinquapin oak, beech, black walnut, white walnut, hackberry, hazelwood and grape vines. The said oak timber, beech timber, black walnut, white walnut, hackberry and hazelwood were heavily loaded with oak mast, beech mast, walnut mast and hazel mast, and said grape vines with grapes. And also that the ground underneath said timber, hazelwood and grape vines growing on said lands were deeply covered with said oak mast and beech mast and walnut mast, hazelnuts and grapes, furnishing to the stock, hogs, cattle and sheep of said plaintiff a good and sufficient supply of food to last his said stock from the 1st of September, 1854, up to the 1st day of April, 1855, of great value, to wit, of the value of two hundred dollars, and the said plaintiff says that the defendant afterward, to wit, on the 20th day of September, 1854, at the county and township aforesaid, did drive in and upon said lands of the said plaintiff one hundred head of large hogs, being the hogs of the defendant, and from thence, hitherto and up to the time of filing this complaint, and feed upon and eat up the mast of said plaintiff and hereby deprived the stock of the said plaintiff of the use and benefit of said mast, to the damage of plaintiff, etc."

A motion was made by the defendant's attorney and the part of the complaint regarding the land owned by Downing & Company was stricken out. A trial by jury found for the plaintiff and assessed damaged at six dollars.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

In 1857 Andrew left behind all the land, bank, canal-boats, flatboats, forge, iron furnace, mill, and store he owned at Richland Furnace and all his interests in the first brick house, the first flatboat, the brick block on the north side of the square, the old brick court house, the brick jail that was located on the east side of the square, and a house on the hill in Bloomfield. He set off for Texas where he became involved with the cattle business and politics.

Andrew was elected to the Texas legislature from Bosque County. When the Civil War began Andrew was loyal to the Union. After he told the legislature that "The 'Secesh' papers were killing their enemies until they had more men dead than were in the whole nation on both sides." he was asked to leave the state. He spent over fifty hours on horseback to reach safety at Fort Smith Arkansas with the United States army. At another time he was forced to ride to safety covering the 50 miles.

Andrew spent the ensuing winter with Colonel E. H. C. Cavins back in Bloomfield, Indiana. Cavins' wife was Andrew's niece. But when Nathaniel Bank's army entered Texas Andrew went with it, and returned to his home there.

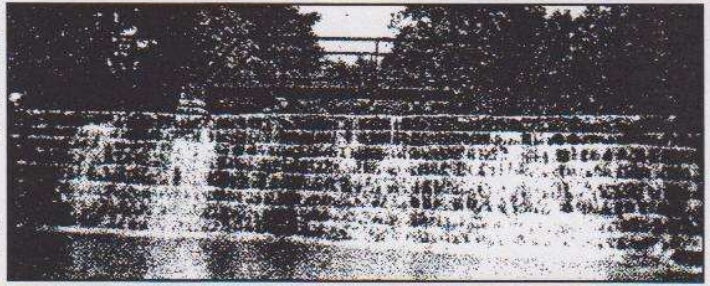
On February 1, 1859, delegates from counties along the line of the Wabash & Erie Canal assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, to determine the best means of keeping what remained of the canal in operation. Called to the Chair was Judge Foster of Evansville. Jos. Ristine of Covington was appointed secretary. Speeches about the canal's value and necessity for repair were made by Fort Wayne's Judge Hanna, Logansport's Chauncey Carter, Wabash's Stearns Fisher, Senators Slack and Steele, and others. A committee to prepare a memorial to the Legislature on the subject was appointed consisting of Hanna, Griswold from Vigo County, Ingle from Vanderburgh, Andrew Downing from Greene, and McDonald from Fountain. Andrew still had much influence even though he lived in Texas

Andrew was appointed a United States marshal of Texas, an office that he held for some years. He died in 1872. He is not buried in Bloomfield nor have we found the location of his burial.

At some time Downing's old bank building was moved to Judge and Main streets in Bloomfield. It served as a veterinarian's office.

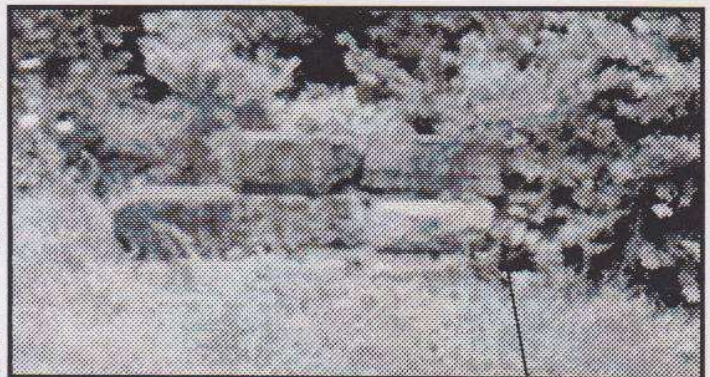
In 1884 citizens of Bloomfield decided it was time to build a new courthouse. The volume of records had increased and there were many laborers without work. A contract was let at the end of April 1885. By mid May the old brick courthouse that Andrew had had

built was cleared away and work begun on a new one. By 1940 the old mill at Furnace was gone. In the 1950s the old mill dam on Richland Creek was destroyed.



Top: The Richland Dam at Furnace backed up water in Richland Creek and was used by the mill and furnace. Newspaper photo
Bottom: Today only timbers remain in the creek bed from the dam once located there. Photo by Bob Schmidt

In 1962 when the rotting iron bridge across Richland Creek at Furnace was replaced by a concrete bridge, artifacts of Furnace Iron Mill were found. The Jake Wilson Construction Company unearthed the remains of the loading platforms while digging holes for new bridge footers. They brought up huge timbers that fell apart when they were exposed to the air. Stones from the platforms, some huge iron spikes and pigs of



This monument to Richland Iron Furnace was made with stones from the loading dock, pieces of slag and an iron pig. It is located beside the new bridge. Photo by Bob Schmidt

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

iron were salvaged and placed as a monument to the furnace mill by the side of the new bridge. The monument has a deep concrete base, eight huge stones set in mortar in which chunks of slag are visible and a rusting iron pig protruding from the stones at its eastern end. Most of the other stones were used in building the new bridge.

Located near Richland Furnace are two old graveyards that remind us of those who once lived and worked at Furnace. Furnace Mill Cemetery has four markers and the Gillam Cemetery has three. Although only a few markers remain, history and the size of the cemetery indicate many more people were buried there.



These pieces of pig iron and slag were exhibited in front of the Bloomfield State Bank in 1967.

This photo by Ray Ames is from the *Bloomfield Evening World*.

In 1967 a display of pig iron and slag was displayed in front of the Bloomfield State Bank. These remnants of the Richland Iron Furnace seemed oddly out of place in this agricultural area of today. They played tribute to the courage, determination and initiative of Andrew Downing and the other early settlers who built and operated a furnace and businesses associated with it in a remote and isolated place over 166 years ago.

Some canceled checks from the Richland Bank were still in existence in 1976. Andrew Downing is still remembered in history books and articles written about him.

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CANAWLERS AT REST

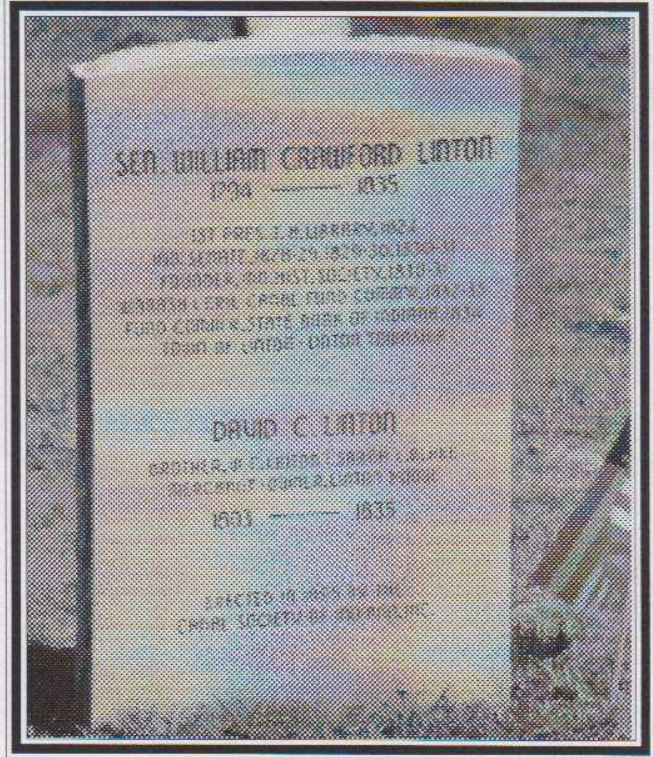
WILLIAM CRAWFORD LINTON

b. 1794

d. January 31, 1835

By Robert F. Schmidt

Photos from CSI photo collection



Today it is hard for us to imagine the excitement the early plans for the Wabash & Erie Canal generated during the late 1820's in the Hoosier state. Immediately after being made a Canal Commissioner in 1828, Sam Hanna rode off to Detroit and then on to New York to acquire the necessary surveying instruments, which were unavailable in Indiana. As various milestones were reached in the plans or construction of the canal, hundreds, even thousands, gathered around bonfires, firing cannons and guns into the air. Indiana at last had joined the eastern states in building its own canal. William Crawford Linton, an enthusiastic Terre Haute merchant supported canals long before the Wabash & Erie came near this city on the Wabash.

William Crawford Linton was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania in 1795 and moved to Terre Haute in 1818. By 1820 he was operating a general store there in a white-frame building on the east side of the Courthouse Square. This business was later moved to 25 North 5th Street. As a store keeper, he was known for his strict commercial honesty. A story regarding Linton was told that reflected upon his clerks and some of the villagers. "At a time Mr. Linton was absent in the east purchasing goods. In due time with other merchandise, a large cask was received, and being opened was found to contain salted codfish. The clerks and the villagers in the store at the time, from the rank smell, pronounced the fish spoiled, and a drayman was summoned to haul the cast out on the prairie and empty it. The wise Paddy, knowing the rich delicacy of the codfish did not lie specially in its odor, notified some of

his friends of the dump on the prairie, and they eagerly shared the prize among themselves."

Public records show that at the August meeting of the Circuit court in 1821, he was one of the board of commissioners, having been recently elected. Soon he built a brick residence on the southeast corner of Third & Ohio streets. It had a larder, bathroom, milk room, and smokehouse. He ran the local post office for a few years.

Around 1828 he purchased land several miles south of town in Honey Creek Township for what became known as "Spring Hill Farm." This land eventually became a community landmark after having been improved further by its successive owners, William J. Ball, Resident Engineer of a the Wabash & Erie Canal, and, then, Colonel Richard W. Thompson, Secretary of the Navy under President Rutherford Hayes.

Local magistrate John Britton once remarked that William Linton "was a small, spare man, and, when not busy would walk back and forth behind his counter very rapidly, with his arms swinging as if in fierce debate with some unseen person. He was a very nervous man, and not without courage." Other descriptions say that he was fidgety, frail, yellow-complexioned and lacked the genteel personality of his brother-in-law Thomas H. Blake. But through his accomplishments it is seen that he was also an energetic, achievement oriented man, who became affluent. His assets were his impeccable integrity, his tenacity, his intestinal fortitude and his leadership.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

In December 1820 Linton married Ann Aspinwall. They had four children. Their son, Freeman Hubbard Linton, died in 1841 at the age of 11 after falling from a horse. In 1821 he served as a co-personal representative for Eliza, the widow of Dr. Eleazer Aspinwall, his father-in-law, and meticulously settled the estate. Linton's fastidious bookkeeping over three years is enlightening. After the death of his first wife Ann, he married Elizabeth Perkins in 1827.

In 1822 he was one of three Vigo county commissioners named to supervise construction of the first Vigo County Court House. He was a founder of the Terre Haute library and in 1824 became its president serving in this office for more than a decade.

Linton's first business partner was his brother, David, who built Terre Haute's first two-story brick mansion in the downtown area. David Linton originally erected his home on the southwest corner of Second and Wabash, but it was moved several times before it was demolished to make way for the Terre Haute Savings Bank parking lot in the 1950's.

In 1827, William Linton brought a carriage to Terre Haute that is believed to be the second carriage to be used there. He decided to run for the Indiana Senate and was promptly elected representing Vigo, Clay, and Sullivan counties. There he crusaded for the National Road, the navigability of the Wabash River, the State Bank of Indiana, libraries for every county, and the Wabash and Erie Canal. He served three consecutive terms 1828-1829, 1829-1830 and 1830-1831 in the state Senate.

Linton was a Whig and a Presbyterian. On May 17, 1828 the Presbyterian Church was organized in Terre Haute and had ten members: Samuel & Margaret Young, Samuel & Mary Ewing, John and Margaret McCulloch, James & Jane Beard, Phoebe Monfort, Mr. O. Dibble. Samuel Young and James Beard were chosen and ordained as elders. William Linton, John Britton and Captain James Wasson were elected trustees.

In 1830-1831 Linton was a founder of the Indiana Historical Society. In 1831 his ethical tenets led to his defeat in the Indiana Senate race. Although the Senate Education Committee, on which Linton served, decided to make an issue of Governor James B. Ray's failing to return the Louisiana Code to the State Library, only Linton was fearless and foolhardy enough to publicly confront the governor. This has been punned as "The Case of the Overdue Book." It set back Linton's budding political career. In 1833 he ran for the U.S. Congress but was defeated. Linton did not let this terminate his public service. In January 23, 1832, when

asked by Governor Noah Noble to be one of three Canal Fund Commissioners to handle financial affairs, he accepted. The other commissioners were: Nicholas McCarty of Marion County and Jeremiah Sullivan of Jefferson County. He served until his death in 1835.

On February 22, 1832 ground was broken in Fort Wayne for the Wabash & Erie Canal. The original plan was to terminate the canal at the Tippecanoe River near Lafayette. But soon after the work began, a movement was initiated to extend the canal to Lafayette and then on to Terre Haute.

Linton did anything necessary to help promote the canal. He traveled to New York at least six times if not more to negotiate loans to deliver funds or notes. He walked whenever a horse, stage, steamboat, or canal boat was unavailable. He often made these trips alone. When he had to deliver the heavy gold specie to the eastern banks as security for Indiana canal bonds, he feared he would be robbed and did not sleep. Sometimes he hired an armed guard to accompany him. He used his own funds to pay the guard.

This Indiana General Assembly in its 1831-32 session authorized placing 32 miles of the Wabash & Erie Canal under contract. By August 1832 the Canal Fund Commissioners had borrowed the first money for canal use from J.D. Beers & Company of New York. The commissioners agreed to pay usurious interest rates of 13.25% for \$100,000. When the fund commissioners reported in 1833 both the house and senate journals show total expenditures of \$75,529.25½ and a balance of \$102,288.57¾. Total receipts were \$176,817.82½, which were derived from the sale of canal lands, the \$100,000 loan, and interest. The work during the season was said to have progressed with "spirit and activity, and was executed in a manner that does credit to the commissioners, engineers and contractors." Also as a Canal Fund Commissioner, Linton replied to a letter addressed the Commissioners while he was in New York, on the subject of a loan for the bridge at the Falls of the Ohio river. He referred it to the committee of canals and internal improvements. They considered it inexpedient to legislate on the subject and asked to be discharged.

Linton appreciated his appointment by Governor Noah Noble and, on September 21, 1833, wrote to him in behalf of Mr. Samuel Barnes Gookins recommending that he be appointed a Notary Public. Gookins received the appointment on September 27, 1833. Gookins, who was an apprentice to the editor of the **Western Register**, later studied law and practiced in the firm of Kinney, Wright and Gookins. He later was a member of the Indiana State House of Representatives (1851-52) and was a judge of the Indiana Supreme Court for three years (1854-57). This shows Linton's ability to choose men of

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

good character. In 1834 Linton was also named a Fund Commissioner for the State Bank of Indiana. He served until 1835.

En route to New York on January 31, 1835, at the age of 41, he died of a massive heart attack in Philadelphia. Within his 14 years in Indiana, he had accomplished more than most men accomplish in a lifetime. Governor Noah Noble quickly submitted the name of Samuel Hanna for consent of the Senate to replace Linton as canal fund commissioner. Samuel Hanna, of Fort Wayne, Allen County, Indiana, was another canal enthusiast as mentioned earlier.

Although the Linton's were successful, they died young. William's sister Sarah Linton Blake, wife of Thomas Holdsworth Blake, died in 1831 and his brother, David Linton, also died in 1835.

On June 18, 1837, Linton's widow, the former Eliza Perkins, wed Lucius H. Scott. Linton previously had been in partnership with Scott for a short time in a store at Third and Ohio streets in Terre Haute known as "Scott's Corner." That same year, Scott, along with the two Law brother of Vincennes and James B. McCall of Terre Haute, platted the town of Lamasco on Evansville's west side deriving its name from the first letters in their last names.

Perhaps the greatest honor to be bestowed on Linton was that of having the town of New Jerusalem, Indiana changed to Linton, Indiana, on November 19, 1835, the year of his death. Although this town in Greene county was not located on the W & E canal route, the route for the purposed Central Canal, was surveyed to go from Worthington through Newberry, all of which is in this county. This name change occurred prior to the approval of the Mammoth Internal Improvements bill in January 27, 1836. The renaming of New Jerusalem to Linton only reinforces the display of canal exuberance at the time.

In Vigo county a township, a square and a street were named in his honor. Today Linton Square no longer exists and Linton Street has been renamed Sycamore.

The only other Indiana town named for a Hoosier canal personality that comes to mind is Hoagland, platted 1872, named for Pliny Hoagland 1810 -1884. Clinton, Indiana, and Clinton county, Indiana are named for Governor DeWitt Clinton, a national canal figure.

In 1994 Michael McCormick, an attorney and historian from Terre Haute, Indiana, contacted the Canal Society of Indiana asking for its help in placing grave markers for William Crawford Linton and Thomas Holdsworth Blake. On Saturday, July 29, 1995, a grave



CSI members attended the grave marker unvciling for William Crawford Linton at Terre Haute's Woodlawn Cemetery in 1995.

marker dedication ceremony was held at Woodlawn Cemetery in Terre Haute. Several CSI members came in turn-of-the-century clothing. I, Robert Schmidt, as president of CSI, recognized the achievements of two of the Wabash Valley's most significant founders: William Linton and Thomas Blake. Both men were area and state trailblazers during their life-times. Sally Russell played "Taps" on the trumpet as the crowd paused to honor the deceased. Mike McCormick received a certificate of honorarium for his efforts in setting up the events from Terre Haute Mayor Pete Chalos. Officials representing the city of Linton, Indiana, were Mayor Jimmie K. Wright and Clerk-Treasurer Ron Sparks.

Michael McCormick in his book *Terre Haute Through The Canal Era* says:

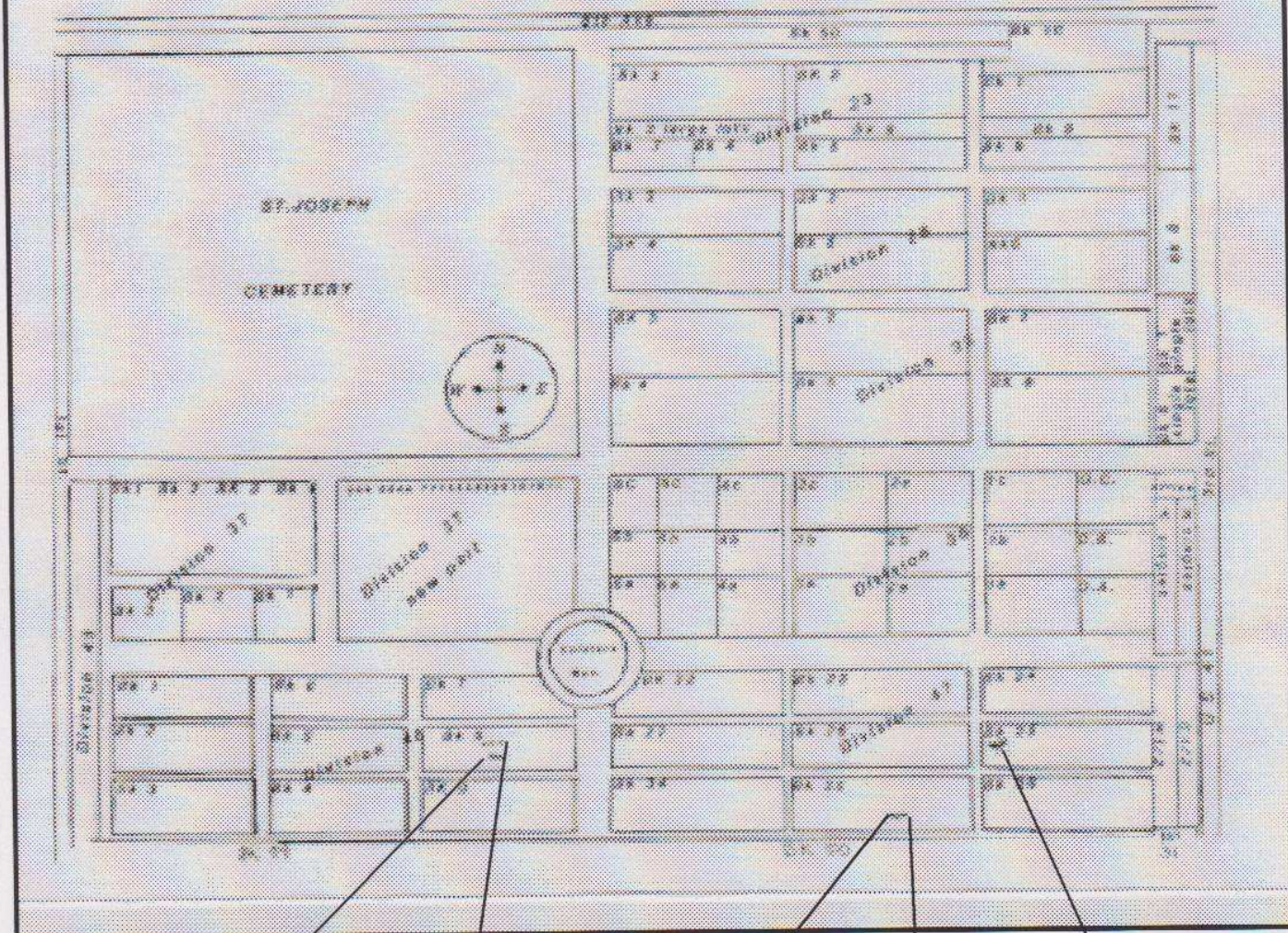
"No monument is big enough to recognize Linton's magnanimous feats for causes necessary to advance his state. He cared not for publicity. He was unafraid to step on toes. His brutal frankness nearly cost him his life on more than one occasion. His work ethic doomed him."

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ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

WOODLAWN CEMETERY



WOODLAWN CEMETERY, U.S. 41 (3RD STREET), TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA
CANAWLERS

William J. Ball
Div. 48 Lot 22 Bk 8

Edward A. Hannegan
Div. 48 Lot 18 Bk 8

William C. Linton
Div. 47 Lot 23 Bk 35

Thomas H. Blake
Div. 47 Lot 23 Bk 35

Thomas Dowling
Div. 47 Lot 5 Bk 25

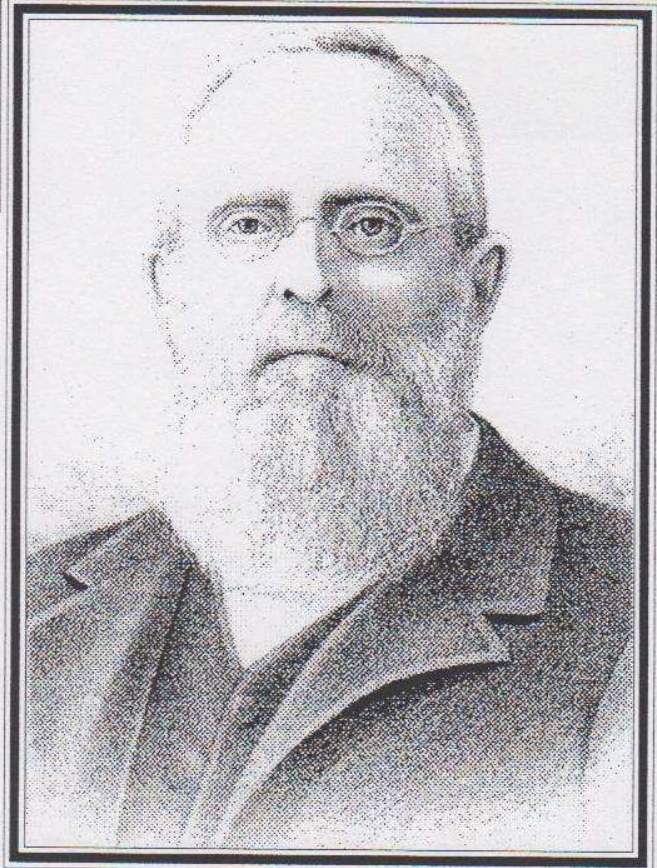
CANAWLERS AT REST

AUSTIN MONTANA PUETT

b. 1803
d. June 3, 1879

By Charles Davis

Photo from 1881 Parke County History



Austin Montana Puett was a prominent man in the affairs of Parke County and Indiana. He resided there from the earliest days of the county until the Civil War, when he moved to Putnam county. Mr. Puett married a sister of Governor Joseph A. Wright, who regarded him as the faithful and efficient follower that he was. He was a leader in the practical work of every campaign, always fighting for the Democratic party, and he also filled various public offices - Sheriff, Treasurer, Canal Trustee and State Senator.

In connection with Austin M. Puett it will be of interest to know more about a family that from the very beginning of Parke County to the present day (1874) has always been prominent in the Democratic party. Among the early settlers to come to the Territory of Indiana was Coleman Puett, who moved with his family from North Carolina to Monroe County, Indiana, in 1815. At that time the country was alive with Indians and they were a source of terror to the women and children. Vincennes was their nearest town. Two or three years later his brother, Joseph M. Puett, moved to Monroe County.

About 1822 (another source says 1828), Coleman Puett moved from Monroe county to Parke county, bringing his wife, three sons and two daughters. The boys were Elisha, Johnson, and Alexander Puett.

Most of the Native Americans had moved west,

but Johnny Green was the last Indian in those parts to live the wild life in the woods. He was a frequent unwelcome visitor at the homes of the settlers. They changed his long unpronounceable name to Johnny Green. He told savage brutal stories and was ugly and ill-tempered when drunk, which caused people to fear him. He related his deeds of barbarous cruelties on defenseless women and children while the men were off fighting the war with the Indians. Once when visiting Coleman's home, he started telling a cruel story about creeping up on settler's cabins when the men were away, slipping the barrel of his gun through an open crack and shooting the women and children while standing before the fire "fleaing themselves." He told how they would fall into the fire when shot and then demonstrated how they kicked and flounced around in their dying agonies. Coleman Puett, having none of that, knocked him out and threw him on the floor. Johnny finally woke up, walked down the road to Hethco Pond and made a temporary shelter by a large tree in which he spent the night. The Puett family watched him through the night to make sure he did not attempt revenge for the blow Coleman had given him.

The next morning Johnny started for Sugar Creek followed by Coleman and his son Elisha, who were armed with their rifles. The following day they found Johnny fishing on a rock in Sugar Creek and Coleman shot and killed him.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

Captain John C. Campbell, who was raised on Sugar Creek and who was familiar with the recent happenings, went to investigate. There was no doubt Coleman shot Johnny. His wife Judith, his son Alexander, and other family members had witnessed the attack by Coleman. This tragedy was later written by Coleman's grandson Shelby C. Puett as related to him by his father, grandmother and other old settlers.

Although most of Coleman's family remained in the Rockville area, Elisha Puett later went to Texas,

where he lived and died. He was in the Mexican war and in all the principal battles of General Scott's campaign. He and one son were killed in Texas by the Indians while carrying dispatches from one army post to another.

Johnson Puett married Patsy Noel. Their youngest son, Elisha A., lived at Long Beach, California. Johnson lived and died in Parke County.

Alexander Puett was one of the party of surveyors who laid out the State road from the Wabash River to Indianapolis. Shelby C. Puett and Mrs. Lucy Bates, his son and daughter, were residents of Rockville. Alexander lived and died in Parke County.

GENEALOGY

Joseph Puett, brother of Coleman Puett, married Elizabeth Moore and they had 11 children:

Armstead W. Puett b. 1800

Louisa Puett b. 1801

***Austrian (Austin) M. Puett b. 1803 in North Carolina d. June 3, 1879 in Greencastle, IN**

Esq. William Wesley Puett b. 1805

Jesse Puett b. 1806

Elisha Puett b. 1809

Francis Puett b. 1812

Joseph Puett b. 1815

Amelia (Milly) Puett b. 1817

Coleman Puett b. 1819 named for his uncle

Nancy Puett b. 1821

***Austrian (Austin) M. Puett married Lucinda (Lucy) Puett, the daughter of Coleman Puett, his cousin on March 19, 1823 and they had eight children:**

William Puett

Austin Puett

James Puett

Louisa Puett Wilkerson

Thomas Puett

Coleman Puett

Caroline Puett Darrach

Albert Puett

Lucy Puett died in 1844 and was buried in Rockville Cemetery, Rockville, IN. Two years later Austin married Amy D., the sister of Joseph A. Wright, who served as the Governor of the State of Indiana from 1849-Jan. 12, 1857. Austin died June 3, 1879.

Beadle, J. H. *History of Parke County, IN.* Chicago: Hill & Iddings, 1880. A *Biographical Directory of The Indiana General Assembly* Vol. 1816-1899. Putnam Co. Will Record, Allen Co. Pub. Library Bk. 2 p. 301.

AUSTIN M. PUETT

Austin M. Puett, son of Coleman Puett's brother Joseph, was born in 1803 in North Carolina. He moved to Monroe county, Indiana with his parents and siblings. In 1820 he moved to Putnam county, Russell township near Portland mills. Later he moved to Parke county. He married Lucy, Coleman's oldest daughter, his cousin. There were 8 children named in his will: Coleman, William H., Caroline Darrach, Albert, Austin M., Louisa E. Wickerson, James W., and Thomas. He was a farmer, merchant, Democrat, and Baptist.

Austin was 2nd lieutenant in the 50th Regiment of the Indiana militia in 1830. He was the Parke county sheriff in 1833 (another source says he was appointed to fulfill the term of Sheriff of Parke county by the Commissioners in 1837 when Sheriff William Kilgore was drowned at the Armiesburg Mill Dam). He was the county treasurer 1834-1838. He served the following terms for Parke county in the Indiana Senate 1835-36, 1836-37, 1837-38 and for the Indiana House 1838-1839. Austin ran for the State Legislature in 1843 but was defeated by James Kerr. In 1844 Austin's wife died and was buried in Rockville Cemetery, Parke county. A year or two later he married Amy Wright, sister of Governor Wright.

A *Biographical Directory of The Indiana General Assembly* Vol. 1816-1899, p. 320

Austin was one of the founders of the Old School Baptist Church in Rockville that stood on the "Commons" located on the north corner of Erie and Ohio streets. This was the church that participated in "The Big Sleigh Ride and Its Wabash & Erie Canal Connections" article that I wrote for *Indiana Canals* winter 2002. Austin also built a saw mill on Williams (Billy) Creek in the early 1840s. This mill was on the east side of the creek and about ½ miles above the Judson road.

In the United States presidential election of 1844 when James K. Polk ran for president of the U.S. and

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

George M. Dallas ran for vice-president, Austin was one of the twelve Democratic electors from Indiana. In 1846 a company called the Parke County Volunteers was organized and held muster in the United States army when war with Mexico was declared. Jacob Oldshue was Captain; Austin M. Puett, 1st Lieutenant; Robert M. Gilkerson, Second Lieutenant. This company was enrolled among those on the waiting list by the Adjutant General of the State, but the war ended before they could be reached in the order of priority of organization.

Governor James Whitcomb appointed Austin a Trustee of the Wabash & Erie Canal. He first served with Charles Butler and Thomas H. Blake in 1848. The trustees changed from time to time. In 1850 he served with Charles Butler and Thomas Dowling. As trustee he participated in the following canal lettings in 1848:

—Forty miles of the Wabash & Erie Canal extending from Terre Haute to Point Commerce including one reservoir, a number of lift-locks, culverts, and rebuilding a portion of Eel river dam and the guard-lock located there

—Seventeen miles of the canal from Port Commerce to Newberry including 6 lift-locks, one guard-lock, a dam across White river 12 feet in height and over 400 feet in length, and rock excavation at the Patoka Summit

—Fifteen and a half miles of canal from Maysville to Petersburg including heavy earth work, the aqueduct over East Fork of White river 400 feet in length

Source: *Evansville Journal*. 1848, 1850.

The Trusteeship

Since Gov. Wright's appointment of Austin M. Puett, of this place, as Canal Trustee, the old line papers are exceedingly wordy and rapping His Excellency over the knuckles without mercy. For the purpose of showing how the appointment is received, we append the following from the *Evansville Enquirer*, a "real old line" paper:

"This appointment is justly regarded by the citizens of Evansville as little less than an insult to this city. We do not question the right of the Governor to appoint any person he chooses to fill the vacancy, but in view of the fact that our city feels perhaps a deeper interest in the success of the Canal than any other town in the State, we say justice required that the appointed should be a resident of this place, or a man identified with our interests and prosperity.

"There were three applicants for the office of Trustee from this city, Dr. George B. Walker, James Rouquett, and James G. Jones, Esqs. The two first the Governor could have no kind of objection to. Mr. Jones, in view of his politics might have been objectionable, though we are free to confess, we should have vastly preferred his appointment, to that of Austin M. Puett. — It cannot be denied that either

of these gentlemen would have made an active energetic and efficient Trustee. As much cannot be said of Mr. Puett. He has filled the office of Trustee before, and it is conceded that he was careless and incompetent. The only merit that he possesses consists in the fact that he is the brother-in-law of Governor Wright.

"Gov. Wright has enjoyed the confidence of the party to which he is attached in this part of Indiana, to an unlimited extent. — They have been forward to show him personal favorite at a time when he was appealing to them for their votes, but now, when he is not an applicant for any official position, he forgets those who were his friends. The Governor may aspire to a position of some kind in future, when his old friends in Evansville will certainly assist him all in their power — to mind his business."

This is tolerably forked, isn't it? But we suppose the aggrieved citizens of Evansville will have to "bore it." As to the charge of incompetency against Major Puett, we presume he is as well qualified as some Evansvillians. Whether competent or not, he has got the office, and they can't help it.

The *Evansville Journal*, (Republican) also speaks in rather bitter terms of the Governor, and seems to think that the Pocket City is the only town in Indiana. Hear it.

"Mr. Austin M. Puett, of Parke County, has been appointed by the Governor, Trustee of the Wabash and Erie Canal in place of Mr. Edmenson, deceased. What do our Old Line Democratic friends of Evansville, who have been getting up big petitions for the appointment of one of their party from this city, think of Mr. Puett's appointment for they may probably be consoled by the fact that this appointee is the brother-in-law of Gov. Wright. The Governor knew that by a right, Justice and decency, Evansville, that the donation of land was obtained which secured the building of the Canal from Terre Haute to Evansville.—He knew that our interest, in this connection, so long neglected so slighted, imperatively demanded a man on the Board, who would give some attention to the lowest section of the Canal, but to aid a begging relative, he has declined giving us this Trustee, and put a brother-in-law in office. We have said before, that Gov. Wright's professed interest for Evansville, was of that same demagogue nature of his professed interest for every place in which at any time he may happen to be—and the fact is illustrated. But his Democratic admirers have a bitter pill to swallow. As for giving the office to a "begging relative," the Governor had a right to give it to whom he pleased. But we opine from our knowledge of Puett's circumstances that the money in the mere office is not much of an object. The Major is like Auditor Dunn, he is in "about as comfortable circumstances as any old liner," that we know of.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

In 1854, Austin served on the Rockville town board. I found this important article in the *Rockville True Republican*, Thursday, September 27, 1855, about his being appointed once again a canal trustee:

Evansville normally voted Democratic. Wright, a Democratic lawyer from Rockville, was elected Governor in 1849 and re-elected in 1852. His first term was for three years under the old Indiana constitution. However, in 1851 a new constitution went into affect. It provided for four year terms and limited service to two consecutive terms. Since he appointed Puett near the end of his second term and could not be re-elected Governor, Wright probably felt no compulsion to appoint a trustee from Evansville.

At some time Austin moved back to Putnam county, Indiana. On October 29, 1860 he was elected a royal arch captain in the Greencastle Chapter (Putnam county) of Royal Arch Masons. In 1861 he was elected a councilman for the 3rd Ward in Greencastle, IN. Austin served as a 1st sergeant in the 102nd Regiment for 8 days during the Civil War in 1863. He moved to Ohio and then back to Indiana. He served again in the Indiana House of Representatives in 1863 for Putnam County. In 1865 he unsuccessfully defended his seat in the House against Higgins Lane and was unseated on February 13, 1865.

Austin Montana Puett died in Greencastle on June 3, 1879. His will left all his property to Amy D. Puett in her lifetime. His children's names were listed in the will.

According to the *Olive Branch*, an early Rockville newspaper, "Wily Austin" was Austin M. Puett and he was referred to as "the braggart Austin"... "the hard-faced, oily-tongued, wily Austin," and tried to "fool the coons," but the "able reasoner." J. H. Beadle in his book tells of Austin as: "Among the earliest (Adams twp.) settlers who attained to prominence was Austin M. Puett, who died a year or two since. He was a man of very decided character, and his life was checkered with stirring scenes. He filled various stations of public responsibility - sheriff, treasurer, canal trustee and state senator."

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CANAWLERS AT REST

THE PETER CORNELIUS VANSLYKES

Grandfather

b. April 5, 1766

d. September 25, 1834

Grandson

b. November 27, 1829

d. April 23, 1891

By Carolyn I. Schmidt

Peter Cornelius VanSlyke ran two canal boats according to Greene County history. When following up on this lead I discovered two Peter Cornelius VanSlykes, the one born later having canal connections and being the recipient of his grandfather's huge coin collection. The VanSlykes were of Dutch descent. They interchanged the names Peter and Cornelius placing one before the other alternating throughout the generations. Therefore Peter Cornelius VanSlyke (who we will call "Peter" in this article) named one of his sons Cornelius Peter VanSlyke, who in turn named one of his sons Peter Cornelius VanSlyke, our subject (who we call "Peter C." in this article), and another son Cornelius Peter VanSlyke. Then Peter Cornelius VanSlyke named one of his sons Cornelius Peter VanSlyke. Confusing? Hmmmm!

The story begins. Peter Cornelius VanSlyke was born along the Mohawk River in Schenectady County, New York, on April 5, 1766. He was a descendant of Cornelius Mey, who managed a little fur-trading post in 1623 where New York City now stands.

Peter's father Cornelius VanSlyke was captured and held prisoner for four years by the Chippewa and the Potawatomi. He was interviewed by the British Indian superintendent William Johnson in July 1767. He told Johnson that the Potawatomi believed "that the great Number they lost of their People at & returning

from Lake George in 1757, was owing to ye English poisoning the Rum, & giving them the Small Pox, for which they owe them an everlasting ill will." Cornelius went to great lengths trying to convince the natives "that in case they made peace with ye, English, they would soon repent it, as they [the British] would then come into their Villages, & thereby destroy em by poison, Small Pox & ca. Which the Informant says they believe as much as can be."

Peter grew up on a farm in the rich bottom land of the Mohawk River with an upland that was sandy. He was a soldier in the War of 1812.

We do not know when Peter married Margaret Lighthall. They had five children:

James VanSlyke (b. ?, m. 7-26-1827 to Margaret Burge in Greene County, later to Mary G. Stallcup d. ?) He was the local sheriff for four years.

Andrew VanSlyke (b. ?, m. ?, d. ?)

Cornelius Peter VanSlyke (b. 8-11-1790 Schenectady, NY, d. 9-27, 1834 GreeneCo., IN, m. 1816 in New York to Anna Edwards (b. 8-17-1795, d. 1887).

Catharine VanSlyke (b. 1793 Schenectady, NY, d.?, m. John VanVorst abt. 1815,)

Sarah "Sallie" VanSlyke (b. 1-?-1799, d. 4-16-1842, Bloomfield, IN, m. Carpus Shaw in Greene Co, IN,)

Peter was described as a handsome man, who stood six feet and four inches tall and weighed about 250 pounds. This description fit that of George Washington and, being from a wealthy family, Peter emulated Washington in his dress.

Moved to Indiana

In 1816 Peter moved temporarily to Washington, Daviess County, Indiana, bringing with him silk knee breeches, silver knee buckles, matching shoe buckles and fine silk stockings that came above his knees. However, he was usually seen in buckskin with fringe down the pant legs and fringed hunting shirts and jackets in the style of the Mohawk Indians.

While at Washington, Peter learned that land was being sold at Vincennes, Indiana, in what was to become Greene County at a later date. He decided to purchase some since it was similar to the Mohawk River farm land.

Peter, his son Cornelius Peter and son-in-law John VanVorst, traveled to Vincennes. The Greene County history says that "The first sale of lands in Greene County took place in 1816 at Vincennes, but only a comparatively few entries were made owing to the remoteness from settled localities. One purchase was made in old Richland Township by Solomon Dixon,

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who afterward became one of the most prominent citizens of the county.... Another entry was made by Peter C. Vanslyke (Peter), who had come from "down East" and located at Washington, Daviess County."

Peter's land purchase was considered to be superior land, mostly river bottom, laying north and south along the east side of the White River west of where Bloomfield is located today. He purchased around 800-1000 acres in what was Orange County described as the East fraction Section 27, T.7 R.5. He then went back to Washington, Indiana.

The first settlers on this property were John VanVerse and Daniel Carlin. They were tenants of Peter VanSlyke and arrived on the land late in the autumn of 1817. With Peter's permission, they erected crude log cabins in the southwestern part of what was to become Bloomfield and began clearing land for crops. They lived and worked hard all winter living on bear meat, fat pork and bread brought from Washington, Daviess County, Indiana. In the spring of 1818 they returned to Washington, picked up their families and belongings and moved to the log cabins. They raised small crops of corn and vegetables while continuing to clear land for Peter and themselves.

Remote it was. In November 1818 Peter's family moved to their new land in Richland Township (by then a part of Daviess County) bringing with them a strong wagon pulled by two horses containing all the essentials needed for a wilderness home. They found a wilderness filled with bears, wolves, panthers, deer and other scary creatures. Indians often camped for short periods of time along the streams. The men threw up a rude log cabin that had only a blanket in the door way, no window except for a hole about a foot and a half square on one side of the building and a bare dirt floor. They left Anna Edwards VanSlyke, Cornelius Peter's wife, and the children in the cabin and returned to Washington to get their personal belongings and settle their affairs before returning to the cabin for good.

After the men had been gone for some days Anna was anticipating their return. Shortly after dark one night while she was outside of the cabin she heard what she thought was someone calling "halloo" down on the river bottom land southwest of the cabin. She thought it was the voice of her brother, Lewis B Edwards. She called back as loud as she could and started a fire on the higher land to help guide him to the cabin. She heard the voice call again in closer range and returned the call. This happened several more times, each time with the voice growing louder and nearer. She was better able to hear it as it got closer. It sounded like a long and plaintive wail. Then the voice stopped. She was wondering what had become of him when a

wild alarming scream rent the air sounding half human and half beast. She ran back into the cabin and barricaded the door the best she could. Looking out the little window she saw a large panther bounding across the clearing. It was afraid of the fire and ran into the woods making its horrible cries. She had been deceived by the cries as were many early settlers.

The names of the first families to settle in Richland Township were:

Isaac Anderson	Reuben Hill	Carpus Shaw
Robert Baber	S. C. Hall	John Shryer
Solomon Burcham	David Heaton	Samuel Smith
Daniel Burcham	John Herral	Adam Stropes
Joseph Burcham	Timothy Jessup	John Terrell
Daniel Carlin	John Jones	Benjamin Turley
Alexander Clenny	Jacob Lakely	Charles Turley
E. P. Cushman	Ruel Learned, Oliver	<u>Peter C. VanSlyke</u>
Oliver Cushman	Lockwood Jeremiah	John VanVerse
Simon Dixon	Lockwood	John VanVoorst
Jacob Dobbins	John Mason	James Warnick
Joshua Dobbins	George Milam	John Watson
<u>Lewis B. Edwards</u>	Orange Monroe	William Watson
Eli Faucett	Barney Perry	Ebenezer Welton
Levi Fellows	Norman W. Pierce	William Welton
Kelly Heaton	William Robison	Abraham Workman
John Hill	William Russell	
Peter Hill	William Scott	

Greene County Organized

Greene County, in which Peter's property was located, was organized in 1821. During the April session five townships were created. In the May session the name Burlington was selected for the county seat. The first county road in Greene County was projected in the August session to run from Burlington through Highland Township to the Owen County Line. A second road was projected from Burlington to the south boundary of the county. Those petitioning for the second road were Peter VanSlyke, Cornelius VanSlyke, Orange Monroe, James Brown, John Owen, James Warnick, William Schott, John VanVoorst, Lewis B. Edwards, William D. Lynch, Thomas Warnick and Ephraim Owen, Sr. A third road was ordered viewed from Ingersoll's Ferry via Fellows' mill to intersect the Bloomington road on the west line of Monroe County. All three were built after the county was organized.

In 1821 the first trial by jury was conducted in the Circuit Court of Greene County. It was on a charge of assault and battery on Peter VanSlyke by Daniel Carlin, his tenant. Carlin was found guilty and assessed a fine of \$1.

In 1822 Peter VanSlyke was a Richland Township officer. He held the position of Fence Viewer along with Solomon Dixon and William Welton. Although we are not sure exactly what the duties of "Fence Viewer"

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entailed, it seemed to be considered an important job at the time. We assume it had to do with where fences were placed along property lines.

At an early day Peter started a small horse mill and distillery. The mill was designed to grind the corn meal for use in the distillery and was used for little else. The distillery, which produced twenty gallons per day, provided an opportunity for selling the corn grown by the early settlers. The county seat was located two miles north of the distillery. Settlers going to the new county seat or, if coming from the south or southeast en route to the Dixon ferry, passed his stills. At that time almost everyone drank liquor thinking it was a necessity of life. Peter's was of superior quality and many a pioneer stopped to purchase whiskey. It was a profitable venture for several years.

Money Problems

Peter's fortune began to grow and began causing him problems. Since there was no bank at that time, he cut a hole in the floor of his cabin, dug a pit and dropped money into it. This was mainly gold and silver coins. Men carried little paper money because it deteriorated in the almost constant dampness and mold.

Peter had the first \$1000 bill issued from the National Bank of Philadelphia. He hid it under his house where it rotted. He went by foot back to Schenectady, New York, to see the man he had gotten it from. With an affidavit from this man, he went to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and had the bill replaced. Then he walked back presumably to hide it under the house again.

Apparently he learned a valuable lesson from this incident for he later put his money in a chest in the hole. *The Early History of Greene County* says that around 1830 great excitement was created in the settlement. One day, after returning home and having been gone for several hours, Peter found his chest broken open and all his money gone. He kept his money in sacks inside the chest.

Although Peter was very wealthy, this great robbery made all the settlers concerned. They flocked in great numbers to the place where the robbery occurred and volunteered to help pursue the robber. An immediate search began looking for clues. It didn't take long and the money was found about thirty yards from the house covered up with chunks [of earth or wood?]. It seems a joke had been played upon Peter.

A New County Seat

In 1823 an act was passed to locate a county seat and build a courthouse. It was approved on Decem-

ber 17, 1823. Relocating Commissioners met at Burlington in early February, 1824, to review the applications for the new county seat. Although Fairplay, a thriving little town with a good location on the west bank of White River and good water, was probably the most eligible, the residents offered only a few donations. Peter VanSlyke owned land in and around present day Bloomfield. He agreed to donate sixty-two acres there plus some small tracts in the county. These 62 acres included a contract for a 25 acre donation from Samuel Gwathmey that Peter had acquired, 25 acres that Peter himself purchased from Gwathmey at \$4 per acre, and 12 more acres immediately west of the others. The land was above the flood zone and had an every-flowing spring providing an abundant supply of water.

The Commissioners snapped up Peter's offer to the disappointment of the citizens of Fairplay. Dr. Hollet B. Dean, a native of Bloomfield, New York, suggested the name Bloomfield and it was agreed upon.

BLOOMFIELD

This new seat of justice of the county of Greene will be sold on the 22d day of April next, on the premises. The terms of sale will be one tenth of the purchase money in hand, and the residue in five equal semi-annual installments. Town orders to be taken in payment, except the one-tenth part thereof. This town is beautifully situated on the east side of the West Fork of White River, on a rich, dry soil, plentifully watered by good springs, possessing as many natural advantages as any other new town perhaps on the river surrounded with a very flourishing settlement contiguous to mills and mill seats. The attention of merchants, mechanics, and manufacturers will be particularly excited by the extent of surrounding country, the convenience of water works, and healthfulness of situation. From the superior natural advantages possessed by the town, and its centrlicity to the center of the county, it is elevated above the fear of future re-locations.

EPHRIAM OWEN, SR., Agent for Bloomfield
February 2, 1824

At the end of the month, February 27, 1824, members of the County Board gathered at the location of the new county seat and directed the Town Agent to lay off the donation into lots according to a prepared plan and to advertise the sale of these lots in the *Indianapolis Gazette* and the *Indiana Farmer*, of Salem as follows:

The locating Commissioners then transferred their claims for duties under the legislative enactment to Peter C. VanSlyke, as assignee, who was paid \$75, in full for such claims. The Town Agent, Ephriam Owen, was ordered to begin erection of a hewed-log court house on the public square of the new county seat.

The town of Bloomfield was laid out by surveyors Hansford Stalcup and John O'Neal with 168 lots, a block set aside for a public square and another block re-

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served for the county seminary. On April 22, 1824 the first lots were sold. The first buyers were Thomas Bradford, Ruel Learned, George Milan, Augustine Passmore, Peter VanSlyke, and Thomas Warnick. Peter purchased lots #62 and 68 on May 18, 1824, according to an abstract in Deed Book A, Greene County. The following year over fifty lots were purchased. By August 6, 1831, \$1,670.06¼ cash had been received by the sale of these town lots. \$69.93 was still outstanding. Ten per cent of these amounts was for the county library.

The original log cabin of Peter and Margaret was replaced. One was built made of weatherboards just east of where the cabin and distillery stood. On April 21, 1824, Peter occupied the new house at 149 South Washington Street. From its windows they could look in all directions and see VanSlyke property. Over the years it has had many families living in it and has been resided.



The home of Peter Cornelius and Margaret VanSlyke
Photo by Bob Schmidt

The first families to live in Bloomfield were Thomas Bradford, Hallet B. Dean, Peter Hill, Otis Hinkley, Augustine Passmore, Peter VanSlyke, and Thomas Warnick. Passmore moved to Bloomfield from Burlington and opened a tavern and a small grocery.

The courthouse for the new seat of justice was to be built on the 276-foot square public lot that overlooked a slope with a fine spring of pure cold water at the bottom of the slope. Nancy Gilliam, Hansford Stalcup and others agreed to donate timber for the courthouse.

During the summer of 1824 the 20 x 26 feet, one and a half story, courthouse was built with hewn logs. It had one door, one window with twelve panes in it, and a good poplar plank floor with one set of joists on the bottom level. The upper level had a tongued and grooved floor, a partition across the upper floor, a win-

dow at each end, and the roof was covered with joint shingles twenty inches long.

After the framework on the courthouse was done, John Hill was appointed by the commissioners to finish it by chinking with short blocks adobed with a mixture of one third lime and two thirds sand on the outside, and clay washed over with lime on the inside. Passmore's tavern did a lively business with the workmen building this courthouse.

By September of 1824, the new Bloomfield courthouse was finished. The County Board met there for the first time.

In 1828 Richland Township was divided and that portion west of the White River became Dixon Township. Officers were appointed or ordered elected to administer the affairs of the township. At that time Peter VanSlyke, Solomon Dixon, and James Warnick were appointed Fence Viewers.

Apparently Peter petitioned the U. S. Committee of Public Lands about a land issue. The Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 1829-1830, on Tuesday, December 29, 1829, says:

"Ordered, That the Committee of the Public Lands be discharged from the further consideration of the petition of Peter C. VanSlyke, and that it lie on the table."

Peter was on the Board of Trustees of the County Seminary along with James Warnick, Samuel Simons, John A. Pegg and Elias Crance. In 1833 the County Board "Ordered, That Lots 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, in Bloomfield, be given unto (the Board of Trustees of the County Seminary), and their successors in office for the use of a seminary of learning for the said county of Greene..." Willis D. Lester, agent for the town, was to make a good and sufficient deed for the lots.

The VanSlyke children built their homes along the ridge of Bloomfield. They took an active part in helping to meet the growing demands of operating the town by holding public offices.

As Peter and Margaret VanSlyke grew older and could no longer care for their new home, they moved to the home of their son Cornelius Peter VanSlyke. It was located north of what was then known as the Indian lookout.

Cornelius Peter VanSlyke and Anna Edwards VanSlyke had three children:

Margaret VanSlyke (b. 7-23-1815, d. 3-7-1878, m. 12-

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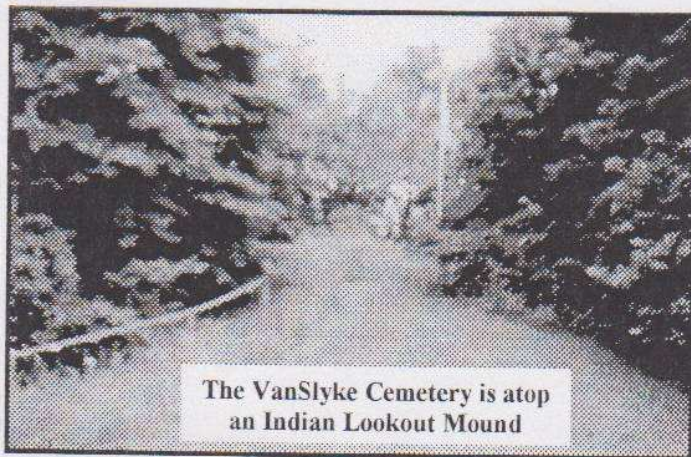
16-1833 to John Inman. They had 2 children.) Henry VanSlyke (b. 8-1-1818, d. 2-6-1886 from a self-inflicted revolver wound just above his temple. His note said he was tired of life., m. 1-7-1841 to Harriet Learned, They had 11 children.) Peter Cornelius VanSlyke (Peter C.) (b. around 1828-1829 in Bloomfield, d. 7-3-1912 in Bloomfield, m. 7-14-1848 to Sarah Jane Boyd in Greene County, They had 8 children.)

Peter C. was the apple of his grandfather Peter's eye being little more than a baby when his grandparents lived in his home. Margaret died in the spring of 1834 and was buried on the crown of the lookout. Peter followed her in death just a few months later on September 25, 1834. Peter C. was only 5 years of age at the time.

When Peter died two cherished relics from his huge coin collection - a twelve and a half cent piece, the first money ever coined by the government, and another silver coin, which had an interesting history - were placed on his eyelids to keep them closed. They were seen on his eyes while he rested in his coffin.

W. D. Ritter states in an 1879 newspaper that Peter was buried next to Margaret Lighthall VanSlyke. The name of their burial ground was changed from "The Lookout" to The VanSlyke Mound." The cemetery is located on the hill on West Main Street behind the former Bloomfield Woolen Mill in the SW ¼ NE¼ 22 7 5.

To reach Peter's grave come into Bloomfield on SR 54 from SR 231 and as you come up the hill into town the old Woolen Mill is on your left. Just past it is Park Street. Turn left on Park and in less than 1/2 of a block there is a mowed path to the VanSlyke Cemetery on your left. Follow the path toward the river and up the mound that has a flagpole on top.



Enter the cemetery gate and in the center of the cemetery you will see a large monument with a log

cabin on top. This is Peter's monument. Six-foot-tall weeds hide other stones around it. The cemetery is centered on the main monument/headstone. It is inscribed on all four sides:

Side 1.

VANSLYKE

Peter Cornelius VanSlyke born on Mohawk River in Schenectady Co. N.Y. Apr. 5, 1766 came to Ind. in 1816. In 1824 he donated to Greene Co. for county seat. The land on which Bloomfield is located. Died Sept. 25, 1834. Was a soldier in War of 1812.

Cornelius P. [Peter] son of Peter C. VanSlyke Born in Schenectady Co. N.Y. Aug. 11, 1790 died Sept. 27, 1834

Side 2.

Harriet VanSlyke Dean Herzog 1856 - 1936
Wilbert Dean 1876 - 1939
Dorothy Dean Bushfield 1882 - 1961

Side 3.

Thomas VanBuskirk born near Gosport in Monroe Co. Ind. Feb. 16, 1861 served as Judge of Greene Circuit Court from Nov. 14, 1918 to Jan. 1, 1931. Died Dec. 10, 1937.

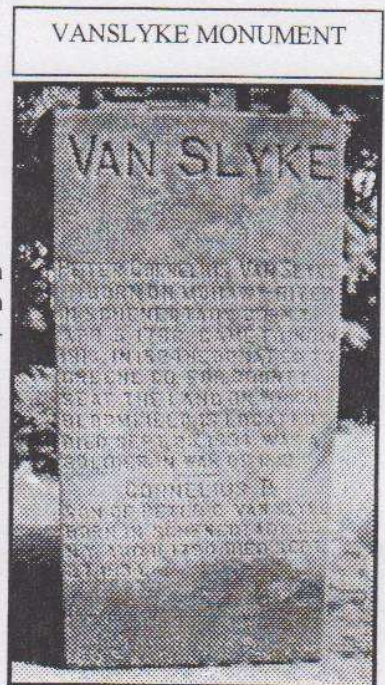
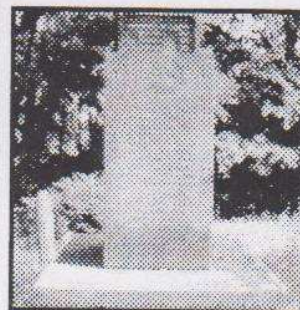
Frances VanBuskirk daughter of Henry & Harriet Van Slyke and wife of Thomas Van Buskirk Jun. 5, 1867 - Jan 20, 1936. She was a dedicated wife and mother.

Side 4.

Anna Cravens daughter of Henry & Harriet Van Slyke. Wife of Thomas A. Cravens Jan. 2, 1852 - Oct.15, 1935.

Katharine Hunley Nelson
Daughter of Mary Van Slyke & John Boudniot Hunley. Wife of John Maurice Nelson July 28, 1877 - Oct. 30, 1962.

At a later date a monument was placed on the mound to mark Pe-



ter's grave by the government. This was for his participation in the War of 1812. The broken government monument was replaced by a huge gray stone with a log cabin at its top by Judge VanBuskirk. He was connected to the VanSlykes by marriage and, by his bequest, he was cremated and his ashes strewn around the monument's base.

Peter died leaving thousands of dollars and hundreds of acres of land. All of his huge collection of gold and silver from many nations was left to Peter C. Since young Peter was underage the money was taken to his sister Margaret VanSlyke Inman's home in Bloomfield across from the courthouse for safe keeping until he was old enough. There was so much gold and silver coin that it required several executors to count it. By the time they were finished their hands were black like when handling lead. It was so heavy that it took a wagon to haul it. By the time Peter C. reached the age to retrieve it, the money was gone and there was no accounting for its use. Later, when Peter C. became of age, he sued John Inman for the whole amount that he had not turned over at the proper time. Inman died penniless.

Although Peter C.'s father Cornelius died two days after his grandfather, his mother Anna lived another fifty-three years. It is wondered why Margaret (age 19 at the time) and John Inman were given the money while Peter's mother was still alive. Perhaps it was thought that the widow might be in danger with it in her possession while Margaret had a husband to protect her.

By 1836 Greene County had outgrown the first courthouse built in Bloomfield. While arrangements were being made to erect a new courthouse, the County Board ordered the County Agent to lay out two towns on two small tracts of land of five acres each that had been earlier donated by Peter VanSlyke. The towns were to be called Van Bayou and Newtown. Van Bayou, which was laid out first, was on Lots #4 and 5 of Fractional Section 34, Township 7 north, Range 5 west. Newtown was laid out later that year on Section 27, Township 7 north, Range 5 west. The plan was to sell the lots to raise money for building the second courthouse. However, few lots were sold, few houses built, and the "paper towns" were soon abandoned.

Peter C. grew to be a man. In the 1840s he and others ran flatboats down Richland Creek to the White River, then into the Wabash River, down the Ohio River and the Mississippi Rivers to reach southern markets. They were loaded with pork, grain, flour, etc. When these boats reached their destination they were sold for the lumber in them and Peter returned home.

The Wabash & Erie Canal

1848 was a busy time in Greene County. Peter C. VanSlyke (Peter C.) married Sarah Jane Boyd in Bloomfield. That same year the survey for the Wabash & Erie Canal in this area of Indiana was made. Burdan, Hutchinson, Pope and Whittle were the engineers. Jesse Lynch Williams, chief engineer of all of Indiana's canals, and William H. Ball, chief engineer of the Wabash & Erie Canal with headquarters at Terre Haute, Indiana, selected the location for a slackwater dam to be built at what was to become Newberry, Indiana. One of the architects was James Ronquet. Treasurers were Owen and Daniel A. Bynum. John F. Slinkard was the clerk. Contracts were let that year for building the canal through the county. Large crowds gathered at Point Commerce (Worthington) to hear the bidding.

Receiving contracts were Joseph Knight, Hugh Stewart and Alonzo Knight. Their contract was for \$140,000 and included the feeder dam, the guard bank, the locks and five miles of excavation above the dam. They began work in the late 1840s and finished in the early 1850s. There were approximately 150 men working on the canal. A special store for them was operated in Newberry.

Once the canal became a certainty, the town of Newberry was surveyed during the winter of 1848. Lots were sold, merchants and mechanics arrived, carpenters appeared, livery stables and dwellings were built, and the town became a hive of activity.

In the 1850 Federal Census Peter C. is a 21 year old farmer. Living in his household are Sarah J., his 17 year old wife, Peter C., his 1 year old son, William Bridle, a 17 year old laborer, Catherine Briddle, age 14, Benjamin Franklin, an 18 year old laborer, and Margaret Inman, age 34, his sister.

In the early 1850s Hiram Bland murdered William Walker for revenge in broad daylight. Bland was caught but escaped and hid in a corn pen. He was re-captured and given the death penalty. Gallows were erected on land owned by Peter C. VanSlyke and on June 13, 1851, many citizens turned out to witness his execution. Peter C. had made a contract for permitting the gallows to be built on his property. In it was stipulated that the gallows remain on the ground until it disappeared by decay. It was left standing until it rotted down.

In the 1852 April term of the court, the Trustees of the Wabash & Erie Canal were indicted for nuisance by the grand jury. Their erection and maintenance of the dam across the White River at Newberry that backed up water over the lowlands adjoining the river was said to

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be the nuisance. There was a court trial but the case was held under advisement until the next term. That court found the defendants guilty and each of them was assessed a fine of \$10. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court and reversed.

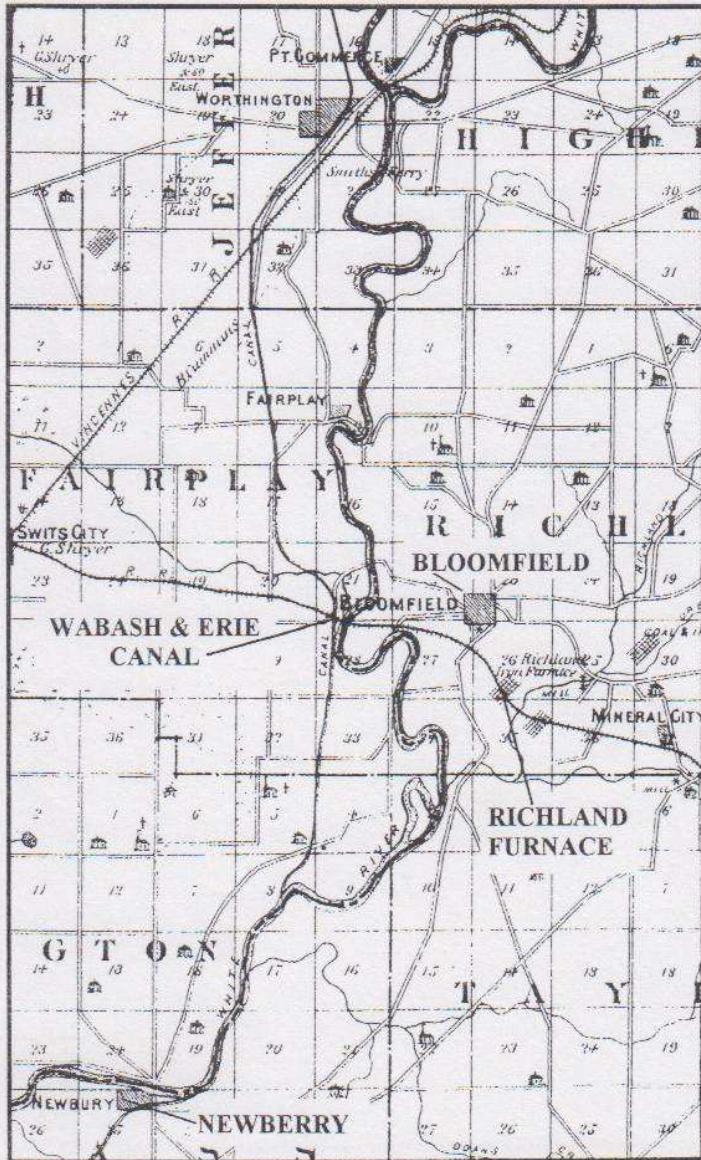
By 1853 the canal was opened all the way to Evansville, Indiana. Bloomfield suffered by not being on the canal and also by Richland Furnace and its iron production being the center of attention.

In Newberry warehouses stored grain and then shipped it by canal when prices were more favorable. B. F. Morse of Newberry shipped \$9,000 worth of produce every spring to New Orleans, the journey taking about six weeks. Andrew Downing from Richland Furnace shipped his iron products to Evansville. Peter C. VanSlyke of Bloomfield shipped grain and other products on his two canal boats named the "John H. Eller" and the "H. T. Ford." The "Ford" was said to be a very

"rapid sailer."

Even though Greene County had six locks to control the water levels on the Wabash & Erie Canal, heavily loaded boats could not use the canal in this area. There simply wasn't enough water available to maintain the proper depth of water to float them. A sufficient amount of business was conducted on the canal until about 1859. From then on it was mainly abandoned. However, from time to time up until 1863 attempts were made to revive it. Since it could not be depended on, it became regarded as an eyesore and a nuisance.

In the 1860 Federal Census Peter C. Vanslyke was 31 years old, born in Indiana about 1829, living in Richland Township, Greene County, Indiana with the post office at Bloomfield. He was a merchant living in the Bland household. In the 1870 Federal Census he was a farmer and had his own household.



1860	1870
Aaron Bland (46)	
Louisa Bland (46)	
Lerry H Bland (22)	
Peter C. VanSlyke (31)	Peter C. VanSlyke (42)
Sarah J. VanSlyke (28)	Sarah J. VanSlyke (38)
Cornelius P. VanSlyke (11)	
Henry VanSlyke (10)	
Jane VanSlyke (7)	Jane VanSlyke (16)
Ester VanSlyke (5)	Ettie VanSlyke (14)
Stephen VanSlyke (4)	Stephen VanSlyke (12)
Margret VanSlyke (2)	Maggie VanSlyke (10)
	Ida VanSlyke (9)
	Victoria VanSlyke (3/12)

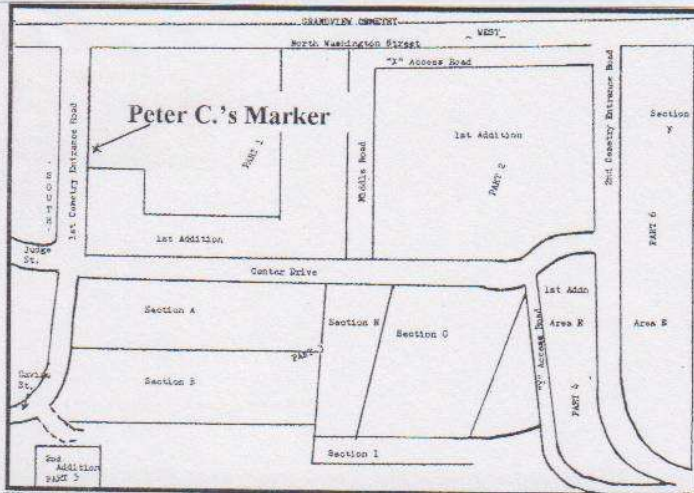
On October 6, 1862, eight men in Richland Township were drafted for the Civil War. Peter C. VanSlyke Provost Marshal, took them to Indianapolis a few days later. During the rest of the year and the next spring hardly any effort was made in Greene County to recruit men.

An 1884 report shows that residents of Greene County and Sullivan County, Indiana, included Cornelius VanSlyke, Eliza VanSlyke, Henry VanSlyke, James VanSlyke, Peter C. VanSlyke (age 55).

Peter C. Dies

Peter C. died on April 23, 1891, and was buried in Section 1, Row 10, Grandview Cemetery in Bloomfield. To reach his grave take SR 54 into town, turn left on North Washington Street, go up the hill and Grandview Cemetery is on the right. Take the first entrance into the cemetery. About half way before you reach Center Drive, Peter C.'s grave is on your left beside the road.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL



Map courtesy of the Greene County Historical Society

Peter C.'s stone bears these inscriptions:

VANSLYKE

Peter Cornelius VanSlyke

Born November 27, 1829

Died April 23, 1891

Sarah J. VanSlyke

Born December 2, 1831

Died July 3, 1912

Photo by Bob Schmidt



When Peter C.'s wife, Sarah J. VanSlyke died, they had trouble burying her. The *Terre Haute Tribune* of July 7, 1912, reports:

HALT BURIAL TO DIG GRAVE

Funeral Party Finds Grave Dug in Wrong Lot

By Special Correspondent.

BLOOMFIELD, Ind. July 6. — The body of Mrs. Sarah J. VanSlyke was brought here today for burial. She was about 85 years of age and lived in Bloomfield many years. Her husband, the late Peter VanSlyke, was one of Bloomfield's pioneer business men. When the funeral party reached the cemetery today it was discovered that the grave had been dug in the wrong lot and the burial was delayed until a new grave was dug.

These two Peter Cornelius VanSlykes played important roles in opening up the frontier to settlers and developing Indiana. During their lifetimes Bloomfield was quite a busy place. Although the Wabash & Erie Canal was several miles away, it provided the area an outlet for its produce. Today it is still the Greene County seat with a population of 2,542 in 2000.

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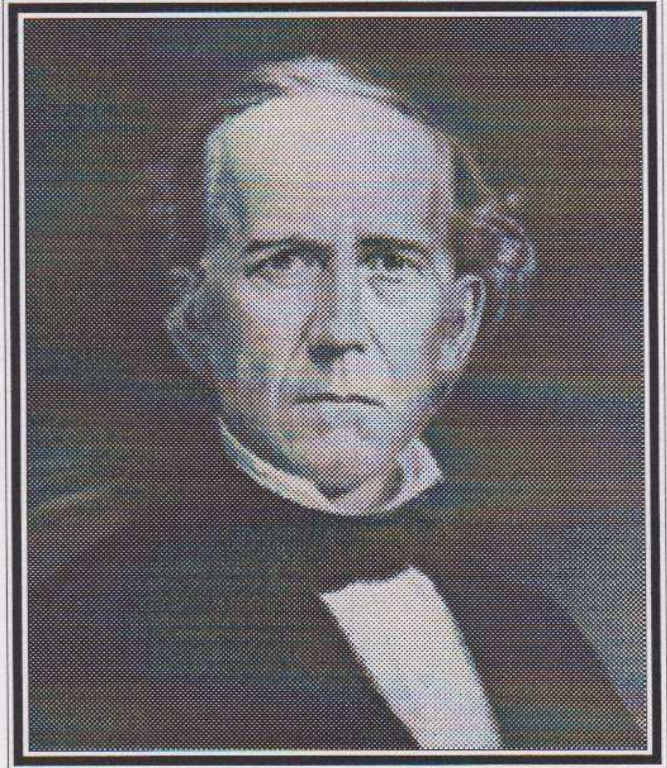
Members of the Greene County Historical Society, especially past president Millie Uland, for names of people to contact and directions to the cemeteries.

CANAWLERS AT REST

JOSEPH ALBERT WRIGHT

b. April 17, 1810
d. May 11, 1867

By Carolyn Schmidt & Mark Smith
Portrait by Jacob Cox



Joseph Albert Wright was born at Washington, Washington County, Pennsylvania on April 17, 1810, to John (a brick manufacturer) and Rachel (Seaman) Wright. While still a youth, his family moved to Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana. The family was poor and his father died when Joseph was 14 years old. They could not assist in securing him the education he desired.

Joseph was ambitious and determined to succeed. While working at odd jobs he attended common school whenever possible. Whenever possible he questioned his elders during conversations seeking information and read books. Through this hard work he qualified for entrance to Indiana Seminary (Indiana University), and studied law. He financed his two years there and the books he needed by being a janitor, bell-ringer, working at carrying off brick from a brick yard and gathering nuts from the woods. He had been trained to use a trowel and did small jobs around the premises. Extracts from the university's records say:

"Friday, May 6, 1828.

"Ordered, That Joseph A. Wright be allowed for ringing the college bell, making fires, etc., in the college building during the last session of the College Seminary, the sum of \$16.25; also, for a lock, bell-rope and brooms, the sum of \$1.37½, and that the treasurer of the State Seminary pay the same."

"Bloomington, Friday, October 31, 1828.

"Ordered by the Board of Trustees, That Joseph

A. Wright be and he is hereby allowed the sum of one dollar for repairing the top of one of the college chimneys, and that the treasurer pay the same."

"November 18, 1828

"Joseph A Wright is allowed for repairing arches in the small seminary building and kitchen the sum of \$1.25."

Defraying his expenses in these humble ways, he left the college and as a student entered the law office of Judge Hester. Joseph passed the bar in 1829. He was almost 20 years old. He began to practice law at Rockville, Parke County, Indiana. He also worked on farm implements.

In 1830 Joseph was badly in need of money to supplement his work as a young lawyer. He bid \$334 per year to deliver mail once a week on route No. 10 from Brownstown to Terre Haute, IN., a distance of 134 miles. The contract was awarded to Alfred J. Athon who bid \$398. Joseph was not well enough known for Postmaster General Barry to regard his bid.

In 1831 Joseph married Louisa Cook. They had one child. Louisa died in 1852.

Joseph's ability became widely noted and by the age of 23 in 1833 he was elected to the Indiana House of Representatives and became actively engaged in politics. While there Robert Dale Owen reports an amusing incident that he witnessed when Joseph was

talking "on the duty of Indiana toward the children on the State—her best treasurers—when his eye was arrested by a chubby little fellow of seven or eight, son of one of our members, who had been sitting on his father's knee and had strayed off, coming down the center aisle toward the orator."

"Ah, there!" said Wright, extending his arms to the boy, who stopped, abashed at the sudden address. 'Look there! I am reminded, when I gaze upon that little one, of a pleasant story from the annals of Rome, in her old republican days. It is related of the mother of the Gracchi, when several of her lady friends were exhibiting to her, somewhat vauntingly, no doubt, their costly ornaments, while she, simple in her tastes, had little to show them in return, that she turned to her children, playing in the room, and exclaimed, 'These are my jewels!' Let us learn wisdom, gentlemen, from the mother of the Gracchi.'

"The mother of the what?" exclaimed, in an under-tone, a rough young country member, named Storm, and whom, because he seldom opened his lips except to move the previous question, we had nicknamed 'Previous Question Storm.' His exclamation was addressed to the member next to whom he was sitting, Thomas Dowling, of Terre Haute. Now, of all things, Dowling loved, from his heart a good joke; and this was too good a one to be lost. So, composing his features, he replied gravely to Storm: 'Why, don't you know her? It is a noted old woman in Parke county, where Wright comes from. Everybody knows her there. You get up and ask Wright, and no doubt he'll tell you all about her.'"

He was re-elected to the House in 1836. He was a prosecuting attorney on the 1st circuit in 1838-1839.

In 1839 Joseph was elected to the Indiana State Senate to complete the term of William Perkins Bryant, who had resigned September 23, 1839; however, Joseph only served until 1840 when Samuel H. McCord was elected to complete the term.

Then in 1843-45 Joseph served a term as a Democratic Representative in the United States 28th Congress. Edward W. McGaughey defeated him by 171 votes in his attempt to be re-elected in 1845.

In 1849 the Democratic party nominated Joseph for governor of Indiana. His never being at a loss for words, ready wit, forceful speaking and ability to come directly to the point made him an excellent campaigner. He defeated John A. Matson and was elected for a three year term 1849-1851. At his inaugural address at the close of 1850 he reported on public works by saying,

"We are progressing rapidly with works of public improvement. In the past season we have completed four hundred miles of plank road, which have cost from twelve to fifteen hundred dollars per mile. There are some twelve hundred miles additional surveyed and in progress. We have two hundred and twelve miles of railroad in successful operation, of which one hundred and twenty-four were completed the past year. There are more than one thousand miles of railway surveyed and in a state of progress."

According to a "Historical Sketch of Parke Co. IN" that appeared in a combined atlas "When Joseph A. Wright was elected Governor, he moved his household goods through to Indianapolis by wagons, George Smith, Levi Smith, Simeon Smith and Joseph Smith hauling them across the country. On Little Raccoon (Creek) about three miles E. of Rockville, the stopped and seemed to be having some trouble. Alex. Puett being not far away went to where they were and found they were having trouble with a barrel of soft soap that had sprung a leak. The night they arrived in Indianapolis, Gov. Wright, who had preceded them with his family and was in office, gave a reception and all of these plain, honest, worthy teamsters, who were always his friends and supporters, were in attendance at that reception and received every attention that could be given them to make them feel at ease and enjoy the occasion."

Simeon Smith was the great-great-great-grandfather of Mr. Mark A. Smith, CSI member, and Joseph was the great-grandfather of same. These two were also the ancestors of Karen Bazanni Zach, Parke and Montgomery County historian and genealogist.

As Governor, Joseph contributed a block for the monument to George Washington in Washington City (Washington, D.C.) as per the request of the Washington Monumental Association. The native block of marble was quarried at Saluda Landing in Jefferson County, Indiana. Joseph wrote the inscription inscribed upon it: "Indiana knows no East, no West, no North, no South, nothing but the Union."

Governor Wright served during a formative period in the history of Indiana as it recovered from the economic depression and internal improvements fiasco. He was very active in its development. He endorsed a compromise measure on the slavery question that was acted on by Congress in 1850. At the end of the year he remarked, "Indiana takes her stand in the ranks not of *Southern destiny*, nor yet NORTHERN DESTINY. She plants herself on the basis of the constitution, and takes her stand in the ranks of AMERICAN DESTINY."

During his first term the State held the second Constitutional Convention in 1850-51 and a new

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

constitution was formally adopted, which stipulated that the governor would serve a four year term. In 1851 Joseph appointed a commission to codify the laws so that they were in harmony with the new constitution. Also education was seen to be of utmost importance and the first State Board of Education was established and educational matters taken over by the regular township trustees. Collection of taxes for educational purposes was begun by Indiana cities and townships. Also that year the first State Fair was held in Indiana.

During this first term, the Cross-Cut Canal, the portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal extending from Terre Haute to Point Commerce (Worthington, IN) was being engineered. It was to cross a "summit divide" between the Wabash and Eel River for a length of 42 miles at a cost of \$718,672. Water was to be supplied south of the Eel River by Splunge Creek Reservoir, a 3900 acre manmade body with a feeder at Rawley's Mill. Resident Engineer William J. Ball felt a second reservoir in the Birch Creek valley on the north side of the summit was needed. In his report he says, "I cannot too strongly recommend the immediate construction of this work, as without it, the Division south of Terre Haute must be comparatively valueless during the dry season. The cost of the reservoir and feeder is estimated at \$24,358., exclusive of damages for the land occupied, and making provision for clearing off 250 acres of the timber."

Birch Creek Reservoir was opposed by resident during the survey period. They threatened to destroy any reservoir built because it would "jeopardize the community's health." Although 1000 acres would be covered by water, Chief Engineer Jesse Lynch Williams recommended that only 250 acres be removed. Driftwood and timber standing in water were believed to be responsible for cholera.

Citizens met at Saline City and passed a resolution protesting the reservoir's construction and filed it with Governor Wright. He contacted lawyers James McLean Hanna and John Palmer Usher of Terre Haute and told them to take steps to prevent the canal trustees from "injuring residents' health." Although Hanna and Usher worked diligently to prevent the construction, their efforts failed and the reservoir was completed early in 1852.

In March 1853, the State legislature passed a bill directing a Physicians' Commission to study the canal reservoirs in Clay (Splunge and Birch Creek) and Gibson (Pigeon Creek) counties. They sent Joseph reports denying that reservoirs were detrimental to public health. They said that the Birch Creek Reservoir was harmless and, since the area was a swamp, "an infinitely worse state of things would follow, if the timber be cut away and the direct rays of the sun let in upon its surface."

Many residents, who suffered from ague, chills and fever refused to believe the report. One wrote, "We have some little confidence left in the office of governor; at least enough to cause us to hope that if he ever takes the trouble to read the report, he will see what a farce has been enacted."

Area newspapers described unhealthy conditions saying the fish in the reservoir had no scales after they had been "shaken off by the chills." Fear was probably as greater force than actual disease in arousing the citizens. At the time cholera was common and the Irish, who constructed the reservoirs, were susceptible. Many of them were buried in Clay County's Old Hill Cemetery. Even Canal trustee Thomas H. Blake succumbed to the disease in 1849.

Joseph was re-elected Governor in 1852 after defeating Nicholas McCarty. Under the new constitution, his second term was for four years making him the first governor to serve a four year term 1852-57. That year he assisted in organizing the State Board of Agriculture, served as its first president, and was re-elected the following two years. Joseph was not a farmer but agriculture was a hobby of his. He quoted Horace Greeley saying "the man who makes two blades of grass grow where but one had grown before, is a public benefactor." His political opponents told an untrue story about him saying that in one of his speeches he advised farmers to buy hydraulic rams to improve their sheep! However, the following true story occurred: "Some one brought him a bunch of hog bristles, taken from the paunch of a cow. He exhibited this as a great curiosity, and was wont to descant upon it for the edification of his farmer friends. At last it was discovered that the cow from which the bristles was taken was in the habit of browsing near a pork-house where hog's hair was spread to dry. While eating grass she had swallowed the bristles, and, as they were indigestible, they remained in her stomach until she died. This discovery spoiled the Governor's lecture on the cow."

Joseph entered into a bitter fight with the State legislature over banking laws and their wish to charter a new state bank. He vetoed both bills, but the Free Banking Law was passed and the charter for the bank of the State of Indiana was granted. Many abuses arose from this law. Currency was expanded "a delusive idea of wealth prevailed and, as a consequence, much injurious speculation was indulged." Joseph took the case to the Marion Circuit Court but was defeated. He then appealed to the Supreme Court, which affirmed the judgment of the previous court. However, he exposed many of the free banks, which had little financial stability, and they eventually disbanded.

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL

The Clay County reservoir was continued. The public was invited to a meeting in the Union Meeting House at Bowling Green, Indiana, on February 23, 1864, to "consult upon the interests involved in the erection and maintenance of reservoirs, dams and pools of water in this county." They adopted a resolution that only legal means should be used to oppose the construction of Birch Creek Reservoir until all timber was eliminated. This resolution was soon made void when at midnight on June 22, 1854, the embankment of the reservoir was cut and its water drained. For the next two years there were several such mob actions.

Although some claimed that everything that was considered reasonable had been done to satisfy those living near the reservoir, the citizens asked what was being done to "protect the public interest in the future against the lawless acts of midnight desperadoes?" Residents said their timber removal requests had been ignored and said the reservoir was built "in such a manner that it would depopulate the whole surrounding country."

Every time the banks were cut, the Wabash & Erie Canal between Terre Haute and Evansville was paralyzed. The reservoir water was necessary to keep the canal navigable. The Terre Haute *Journal* said, "If the State authorities have not the power to prevent and punish such lawless acts of outrage, it is time the public should know it."

The citizens claimed they condemned the "mob-temperament," they "believed that a man has a right to defend his life and property." Hanna tried to squelch this renewed struggle by holding a meeting at the Eel River feeder dam on July 28, 1854 "To consider the best means of arranging difficulties which exist in regard to the Reservoir." Present were Thomas Dowling and two trustees of the Canal Company. The meeting resulted in a compromise with the trustees agreeing to remove all timber from Birch Creek Reservoir and the citizens promising to no longer commit further damage.

Thomas Dowling spent over \$1,000 to have laborers clear out the reservoir and repair the embankment. A short two months later on September 9, 1854, the feeder dam was burned to the water's edge. The "Reservoir Regulators" were credited with the deed, but it was never proven. This led to a loss of confidence in the canal and a loss of \$20,000 in revenue. Once again repairs were made and a few boats actually made the trip to Terre Haute from Evansville. Then, just as regular trips between these cities were scheduled and trade resumed, 200 men with blackened faces carrying guns and pistols broke the reservoir's embankment and waved the American flag over the gap on May 8, 1855. The war continued and was reported in the Terre Haute

American.

Governor Wright issued a declaration on May 24, 1855, which offered a \$5,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of the dam-breakers, and led residents to believe he would employ a force to keep the "promises of the State of Indiana." He was greeted with posters warning him not to employ men to repair the breach when he arrived at the reservoir.

In June 1855 the Regulators partially wrecked the aqueduct across Birch Creek, demolished all the buildings used by the workmen and stole all their tools. Residents claimed they had no knowledge of who was responsible for the destruction and said that the offenders probably came from outside the county. This act was the last straw. It drove the laborers away and repair work stopped.

Gov. Wright rebuked both the Clay County Sheriff for malfeasance and some other authorities. He called out 50 militia under General Dodd of Marion County and Colonel Nees of Clay County and asked for volunteers. About 60 men came increasing the militia to over 100 men. Most of the latter were from Evansville.

Canal trustees agreed to removing all timber from the canal as soon as possible at a meeting held on June 21, 1855. By then seventeen men had been arrested and charged with arson and malicious trespass. They were questioned and released. Gov. Wright sent the troops away. On August 1, 1855, the *Clay County Citizen* called for assistance in clearing timber from the reservoir without draining off the water.

On June 29, 1855, there was another attempt during the night to cut the reservoir embankment and other efforts failed. Then again the aqueduct was severally damaged in August, 1857.

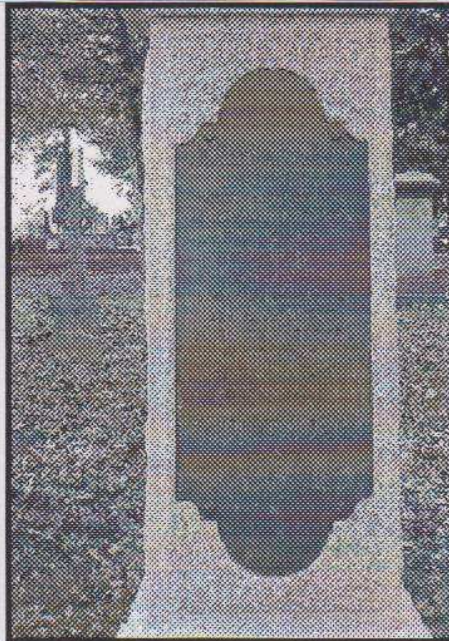
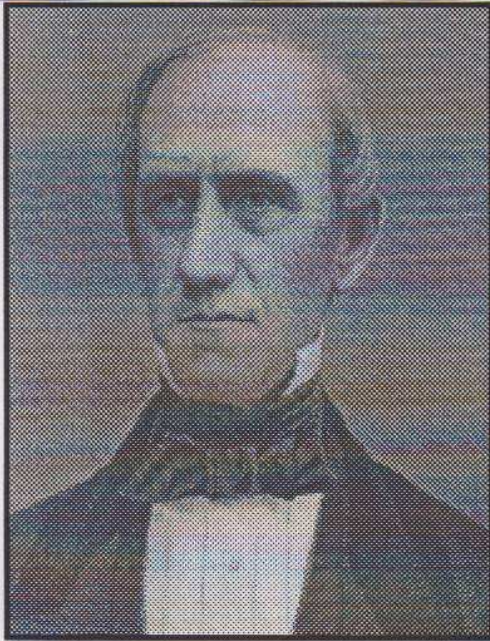
In a last ditch effort, Miller and Hedges tried to keep open the Cross-Cut portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal from Terre Haute to the Eel River Dam in 1860. Terre Haute provided \$1,000 to help them, but, within a short time their efforts were abandoned. The railroad was quickly replacing the canal, probably much to Gov. Wright's relief.

During Wright's term as Governor the old Whig party in Indiana died. The Know Nothing party was born and died. The Republican party was formed.

In 1854 Wright married for the second time. This wife was Harriet B. Burbridge.

In 1857, when Joseph Wright's second term as Governor expired, he was appointed as Envoy

ACROSS THE CROSS-CUT CANAL



JOSEPH A. WRIGHT
 OF INDIANA
 HAVING SERVED HIS STATE
 AS GOVERNOR, HIS COUNTY
 IN U.S. CONGRESS
 DIED IN BERLIN
 MAY 11, 1857
 DURING HIS 2ND OFFICIAL
 TERM AS U.S. MINISTER
 TO THE COURT OF PRUSSIA
 IN THE TRIUMPH
 OF CHRISTIAN FAITH
 AGED 57 YEARS
CAROLINE R. DAVIS
 HIS WIFE
 BORN FEB. 4, 1812
 DIED APRIL 17, 1896

Left: Hon. Joseph A. Wright, Governor of Indiana, first President of the Indiana State Board of Agriculture and U. S. Minister Plenipotentiary at Berlin engraved by J. C. Buttre from a photograph. Woolen 1883.

Center: Gravestone of Joseph A. Wright and his wife Caroline R. Davis courtesy of Mark Smith, CSI member, Brookston, IN.

Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Prussia (1857-1861) by President James Buchanan and was sent to Berlin, the capital. He served as Minister for four years.

In 1860 Joseph supported Stephen A. Douglas, the Democratic candidate for President of the United States. In 1861 Joseph returned to Indiana. He became the leader of the War Democrats, who favored alliance with the Republicans in attempting to lay aside political struggles until the Civil War was over. He joined the Union Party.

In 1862, Governor Oliver P. Morton appointed Joseph as a Unionist to the United States Senate to fill the vacancy left after his enemy Jesse D. Bright was expelled. He served in this position for one year, February 1862-January 1863..

In 1863 President Abraham Lincoln appointed Joseph as Commissioner to the Hamburg Exposition. Then in 1865 President Andrew Johnson re-appointed him as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Prussia (1865-death 1867). He served in this capacity until his death at Berlin on May 11, 1867.

Joseph was a zealous Methodist and supported the Sunday school. Many citizens thought he used his church connection to advance his political career.

A tall and raw-boned man, Joseph had a large head and an unusually high forehead. He had light thin

hair, blue eyes and a prominent nose and mouth. He spoke simply and earnestly. He was influential in matters concerning the public welfare. He set a good example by being a moral, religious, honest and economic man.

Married three times, Joseph was the father of four children. The grave and marker for Joseph Albert Wright and Catherine R. Davis, his third wife, can be found in Greenwood Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York.

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